DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 240 585 CS 208 144

AUTHOR Cronnell, Bruce; And Others
TITLE Cooperative Instructional Application of Writing Research. Final Report. Volume Two.
INSTITUTION Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, Los Alamitos, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Nov 82
NOTE 447p.; For related documents, see CS 208 143-145.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC18 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Revision (Written Composition); Sentence Structure; Spelling; Spelling Instruction; *Staff Development; Workshops; Writing Difficulties; *Writing Instruction; Writing Processes; *Writing Research; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS *Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

The second of three volumes on the relationship between writing research and instruction, this report first describes a 1982 conference on writing policies and problems sponsored by the Educational Research and Development division of the Southwest Regional Laboratory (SWRL) and the California State University, Long Beach. The second section reports on a series of staff development workshops in written composition which reviewed the results of a student writing skill survey, presented a general view of the composing process and of writing instruction, and discussed specific writing problems among students in grades 2 and 3 and grades 5 and 6. The third section contains three issues of SWRL's "Instructional Improvement Digest" on teaching students to revise, teaching sentence structure and versatility, and increasing student writing quality and quantity without increasing the teacher's paper load. The final section contains four reports on the following spelling-related topics: regularity and irregularity in spelling and spelling instruction, the occurrence of selected features in elementary school spelling texts, the relative frequency of homophones in children's writing, and the use of the Proficiency Verification System (PVS) to assess students' regular spelling development. This last report includes copies of the prototype materials. (MM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED240585

COOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL APPLICATION OF WRITING RESEARCH

FINAL REPORT

VOLUME TWO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

November 1982

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
SWRL

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

CS 208 144

INTRODUCTION

Writing is a well recognized regional as well as national problem, but the research base for dealing with the problem is not very strong. Recognizing this gap, the National Institute of Education has been fostering research in writing through its grants program. Over the years, SWRL has also included composition as an object of inquiry, concentrating on embodying research in tools that are directly usable by students, teachers, administrators, and others concerned with composition instruction and assessment. Work in the area of "Cooperative Instructional Application of Writing Research" joined the capabilities of NIE and of SWRL to accelerate the process by which research nationally can have an impact on instruction regionally (and nationally).

During the course of this project we invited to SWRL a number of writing researchers, as well as a number of composition teachers from the SWRL region, to meet with SWRL language researchers and instructional experts. Thus the researchers met with audiences with whom they could discuss extensively and substantively the instructional implications of their work. Such cooperative forums had several benefits:

1. Researchers from academic settings met directly with persons experienced in the creation of instructional resources and with persons who actually engage in instruction. Consequently, the composition researchers who participated in this collaborative program had the opportunity to develop a stronger sense of (1) what constitutes educationally oriented research, and (2) what kinds of research questions and strategies have potential for immediate impact on instruction and learning.

2. SWRL staff and representative regional constituents concerned with composition instruction gained immediate, substantial access to current research in writing.

3. The instructional implications of research were clarified. Most writing research is sharply focused, but narrow in scope. Although this is an appropriate research strategy, the individual research efforts are often too specific to form the basis for significant instructional implementation. Collectively, however, sets of these endeavors can form meaningful and responsible bases for instructional application.

4. Research results were embodied into forms usable for instruction and assessment. Few, if any, writing researchers have the resources or inclination to attempt this. SWRL has the capability to forward such implementation and has a broad experiential base that allows us to avoid many of the procedural problems that prevent the exploitation of good ideas to their best advantage for instruction and assessment.

Providing this forum for the exchange of ideas among researchers, practitioners, and persons with instructional implementation experience is of itself beneficial. However, the problems in composition instruction and assessment are of sufficient magnitude to warrant not only discussion but also application of promising research. Therefore, this final report summarizes both research in writing and the instruction/assessment applications of such research.

This report is divided into three volumes. Volume One covers the "heart" of the project: discussions among researchers, practitioners, and instructional experts; studies of writing research; instructional applications. Volume Two covers extensions of the work discussed in Volume One; these extensions--sometimes funded by other NIE/SWRL projects or funded by other agencies--exemplify cooperative activities that developed from our basic studies. Volume Three covers extensions specific to the assessment of writing.

Acknowledgments: This report was prepared by Bruce Cronnell, Larry Gentry, Ann Humes, and Joseph Lawlor.

COOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL APPLICATION OF WRITING RESEARCH

FINAL REPORT

Table of Contents

VOLUME ONE

Part I: Research/Practice Conferences

- A. Moving Between Practice and Research in Writing
- B. Dialect and Writing: The Needs of Linguistically Different Students
- C. Effective Communication of Writing Research
- D. Computers in Composition Instruction
- E. Practical Writing

Part II: Studies of the Literature

- A. Annotated Bibliography of Literature Studies
- B. "The Composing Process: A Summary of the Research"
- C. "Research on the Composing Process: Methodology, Results, and Limitations" (Technical Report No. 78)
- D. "Putting Writing Research into Writing Practice--Easily" (Journal Article)

Part III: Instructional Components

- A. Filmstrip: "Helping Students Write Better and Write More"--Annotated Script
- B. Prototype Composition Instruction: "Learning to Compose"

Table of Contents (continued)

VOLUME TWO

Part I: Conference: "Writing: Policies, Problems, and Possibilities"

Part II: Staff Development Workshops in Written Composition

- A. Grades 2 and 3
- B. Grades 5 and 6

Part III: Instructional Improvement Digests

Part IV: Spelling

- A. "Regularity and Irregularity in English Spelling and in Spelling Instruction" (Technical Note No. 2-82/29)
- B. "The Occurrence of Selected Features in Elementary Spelling Texts" (Technical Note No. 2-80/13)
- C. "Relative Frequency of Homophones in Children's Writing" (Technical Note No. 2-82/21)
- D. Proficiency Verification Systems for Spelling

Table of Contents (continued)

VOLUME THREE: ASSESSMENT

Part I: Survey of Essential Skills (Los Angeles Unified School District)

- "The Development of Assessment Specifications for Composition Skills" (Technical Note No. 2-80/25)
- "Written Composition Results on the 1980 Survey of Essential Skills" (Technical Note No. 2-81/07)

Part II: Competency Based Assessments for Language Arts (District of Columbia Public Schools)

- "The Development of Item Specifications for Language Arts Assessment"
  - "Part I: Listening" (Technical Note No. 2-82/01)
  - "Part II: Grammar Usage" (Technical Note No. 2-82/02)
  - "Part III: Sentence Structure" (Technical Note No. 2-82/03)
  - "Part IV: Capitalization and Punctuation" (Technical Note No. 2-82/04)
  - "Part V: Language Expression" (Technical Note No. 2-82/05)
  - "Part VI: Spelling" (Technical Note No. 2-82/06)
  - "Part VII: Literature" (Technical Note. No. 2-82/07)
  - "Part VIII: Study Skills, Mass Media, and Nonverbal Communication" (Technical Note No. 2-82/08)

Part III: Proficiency Surveys and Review Exercises (Sacramento City Unified School District)

Part IV: Annotated Bibliography of Assessment Reports

VOLUME TWO

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the work described in Volume One, staff undertook additional activities that extended our cooperative applications of writing research to instruction and assessment. Volumes Two and Three report these extensions.

In various ways, SWRL works cooperatively with institutions and organizations within its region. The major institution physically closest to SWRL is California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). Both CSULB and SWRL have great interest in improving writing instruction. Because of SWRL's past experiences with writing conferences (see Part I of Volume One), it was decided that the first cooperative venture between the two organizations would be the co-sponsorship of a writing conference. SWRL's participation in this conference was partly funded through the NIE-sponsored Information Exchange and Technical Assistance project. A report of this SWRL/CSULB writing conference is found in Part I.

Over the years, SWRL has had an important relationship with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). One long-term LAUSD-funded project is Curriculum Alignment--an effort to match goals, assessment, and instruction, primarily at the elementary level. The teachers involved in this project indicated that they needed help with writing instruction. Consequently, composition staff were asked to provide staff development sessions for teachers in the Curriculum Alignment schools. This staff development was based on SWRL's experience over the past decade and is reported in Part II.

One activity, presented in Part III, was conducted in cooperation with staff of the NIE-funded Schooling Practices and Effects project. Composition staff prepared three of the Instructional Improvement Digests that have been produced by that project.

During the past 12 or more years, SWRL has done a considerable amount of work with spelling. These research and development activities have given SWRL a foremost position in the world of spelling. Although spelling is not a major focus of most current composition research, SWRL has continued its work with spelling because spelling is still of considerable interest and concern to students, teachers, administrators, and the public. Part IV of this volume reports on our work with spelling during the contract period.

PART I: CONFERENCE

PART I

WRITING:
POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES

A Conference Co-sponsored by

SWRL Educational Research and Development
and
California State University, Long Beach

Friday, May 7, 1982
at
SWRL Educational Research and Development
Los Alamitos, California

WRITING:
POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES

SUMMARY

In recent years, educational institutions at all levels have become increasingly concerned about writing. Once a low-priority topic, writing is currently receiving the attention that it justly deserves.

For more than a decade, SWRL has been involved with various aspects of research and development in composition instruction, primarily with funding from the National Institute of Education. And more recently, SWRL has conducted writing conferences that have brought together researchers and practitioners (see Part I of Volume One).

A close neighbor of SWRL is California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). CSULB (along with other state colleges and universities) has been increasingly active in writing assessment and instruction. Incoming students must take a writing proficiency test and receive remedial instruction if needed. All students (graduate as well as undergraduate) must meet a writing proficiency requirement for graduation.

Thus, as neighbors sharing similar interests, SWRL and CSULB jointly planned a one-day conference to focus on three areas of concern to both institutions and to other institutions in the area: the policies related to writing, the perceived problems of writing and of writing instruction, and the possibilities for improved writing instruction and evaluation.

Registration

Registration for the conference was open to the public, with a fee charged to help pay for conference expenses, including lunch, copies of the proceedings, and copies of a new publication of the California State

Department of Education: Handbook for planning an effective writing program. (Both SWRL and CSULB provided in-kind support for the conference in the way of staffing and institutional services. The CSULB Foundation covered all additional expenses.)

Over 1000 flyers (see Attachment A) were sent out to individuals and institutions in southern California. Ninety-six people registered for the conference. See Attachment B for a list of institutions represented by the registrants.

Agenda (see Attachment C)

The conference ran from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 7, 1982. Welcoming remarks were delivered by William H. Hein, Jr. (Deputy Executive Director, Administration, SWRL) and by Glendon F. Drake (Vice-President for Academic Affairs, CSULB).

Then a panel of eight speakers presented position papers on policies and problems of writing. Linda Bunnell Jones of the Chancellor's Office of the California State University, discussed policies toward writing within that system. Mary K. Healy described writing at the University of California, Berkeley, with particular emphasis on the work of the Bay Area Writing Project. Representing private colleges and universities, Peter Ward Fay (California Institute of Technology) discussed the writing problems of students on his campus. The community college situation, especially within the Los Angeles Community College District, was described by Rose M. Najar. Kathryn Edwards (Los Angeles Unified School District) indicated the many problems faced by the public schools when writing is taught. The operation of one of the California writing Projects--the South Basin Writing Project--was described by Alice Brekke

(CSULB). The last two speakers discussed perceptions of the writing problem from the point of view of the public (Georganne Thomsen, League of Women Voters) and from the point of view of the media (David G. Savage, Los Angeles Times).

The major part of the conference was devoted to the presentation of five research papers that focused in depth on specific topics that addressed the possibilities for improved writing. Ann Humes (SWRL) provided background to the four remaining papers, discussing the methodologies employed in research on the composing process, and the results of this research in terms of composing processes and subprocesses. Huynh Dinh Te (CSULB) identified the unique English-writing problems of speakers of other languages and described strategies and techniques for teaching writing to such students. Joseph Williams (University of Chicago) discussed writing programs for professional and technical people. Mike Rose (UCLA), although questioning some aspects of remedial writing programs, provided practical suggestions for improving such programs. Richard Stiggins (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory) gave a status report on current developments in writing assessments, comparing and contrasting the use of direct and indirect measures of writing ability.

The conference concluded with closing remarks by Richard M. Clowes (University of Southern California), who offered challenges for the future.

Proceedings

All the papers presented at the conference were edited by the conference organizers, Bruce Cronnell (SWRL) and Joan Michael (CSULB), and printed (by SWRL) as the conference proceedings. This 165-page book (Writing: Policies, problems, and possibilities) was distributed to conference registrants and speakers. In addition, over 100 complimentary copies were distributed by CSULB and SWRL. Copies of the book were also made available for purchase (at SWRL's cost). See Attachment D for the flyer announcing the availability of the book; approximately 1000 copies of this flyer were distributed by SWRL and CSULB.

ATTACHMENT A

California State University, Long Beach

and

SWRL Educational Research and Development

present

WRITING: *POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES*

When: Friday, May 7, 1982
8:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Where: SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, California

A conference to discuss problems in writing, policies towards writing assessment and instruction, and possibilities for improving the teaching and testing of writing.

Speakers:

Ann Humes (SWRL): *Research in the Composing Process*
Mike Rose (UCLA): *Writing for Remedial Writers*
Richard Stiggins (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory): *Writing Evaluation*
Te Dinh Huynh (CSULB): *Writing for Speakers of Other Languages*
Joseph Williams (University of Chicago): *Writing in Applied Fields*

Panel: Panel members will represent the following:

- California State University
- University of California
- Private colleges and universities
- Community colleges
- Public schools
- California Writing Projects
- The media
- The public

Registration: Registration is $30 and includes lunch plus the conference proceedings. Attendance is limited, so early registration is advised. ***Deadline for registration: April 23, 1982.***

Please register me for **WRITING: *POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES.*** Enclosed is a check for $30 made out to "CSULB Foundation." (Please, no purchase orders.)

Name ______________________________

Address ______________________________

____

Institutional Affiliation (for name tag) ______________________________

Send this form and your check to ***Bruce Cronnell***
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

ATTACHMENT B

Institutions Represented by Conference Registrants*

ABC Unified School District
Alhambra High School
Ambassador College
Banning High School
Bellflower Unified School District
Bishop Amat High School
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Long Beach
Channel Islands High School, Oxnard
Claremont Unified School District
Corona-Norco Unified School District
Costa Mesa High School
Covina Valley Unified School District
Downey Unified School District
El Rancho Adult School
El Rancho High School
Ganesha High School, Pomona
Garden Grove Unified School District
Glendora High School
Hillcrest School, Redondo Beach
La Habra High School
Long Beach City College
Los Angeles Trade Technical College
Los Angeles Unified School District
Loyola Marymount University
Lynwood High School
Montebello Unified School District
Monterey Peninsula College
Mountain View School District
North Orange County Regional Occupational Program
North San Antonio Elementary School
Office of Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools
Orange Unified School District
Palos Verdes High School
Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District
Palos Verdes School District
Pomona Unified School District
Redondo Beach City School District
Rialto Unified School District
Richard Arthur and Associates
Rio Hondo Community College
Rolling Hills High School
San Diego Public Schools
Santa Ana College
South Basin Writing Project
University of California, Irvine Writing Project
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, San Diego
University of Southern California
William S. Hart Union High School District

---

*All institutions are in California.

ATTACHMENT C

Agenda

WRITING: *POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES*

A Conference Co-Sponsored by

California State University, Long Beach

and

SWRL Educational Research and Development

Friday, May 7, 1982

SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

PROGRAM

8:00 **Registration, coffee**

8:45 **Welcome**

William H. Hein, Jr. (Deputy Executive Director, Administration, SWRL Educational Research and Development)

Glendon F. Drake (Vice-President for Academic Affairs, California State University, Long Beach)

Chair: Bruce Cronnell (SWRL Educational Research and Development)

9:00 **Panel: Policies and Problems**

Representing

- California State University
  Linda Bunnell Jones (Chancellor's Office)
- University of California
  Mary K. Healy (University of California at Berkeley, Bay Area Writing Project)
- Private colleges and universities
  Peter Ward Fay (California Institute of Technology)
- Community Colleges
  Rose M. Najár (East Los Angeles College)
- Public schools
  Kathryn Edwards (Los Angeles Unified School District)
- California Writing Projects
  Alice Brekke (South Basin Writing Project, California State University, Long Beach)
- The public
  Georgeann Thomsen (League of Women Voters)
- The media
  David G. Savage (Los Angeles Times)

Moderator: Joan Michael (California State University, Long Beach)

10:00 ***Research on the Composing Process***

Ann Humes (SWRL Educational Research and Development)

Chair: Joseph Lawlor (SWRL Educational Research and Development)

10:45 **Break**

11:00 ***Writing for Speakers of Other Languages***

Huynh Dinh Te (California State University, Long Beach)

11:45 **Lunch at SWRL**

1:00 ***Professional Writing Programs and the Universe of Discourse***

Joseph Williams (University of Chicago)

Chair: Larry Gentry (SWRL Educational Research and Development)

1:45 ***Remedial Writing Courses: Do They Limit More Than Foster Growth in Writing?***

Mike Rose (University of California at Los Angeles)

2:30 **Break**

2:45 ***A Status Report on Writing Assessment***

Richard Stiggins (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory)

3:30 **Closing Remarks**

Richard Clowes (University of Southern California)

4:00 **Adjournment**

ATTACHMENT D

WRITING: POLICIES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITIES

The proceedings of a conference co-sponsored by SWRL Educational Research and Development and by California State University, Long Beach

Edited by Bruce Cronnell and Joan Michael

1982 $5.00 165 pages

Panel Papers: Policies and Problems

Representing

- The Public: Georganne Thomsen
- The media: David G. Savage
- The California State University: Linda Bunnell Jones
- California Writing Projects: Alice Brekke
- Private colleges and universities: Peter Ward Fay
- Community Colleges: Rose M. Najar
- Public schools: Kathryn Edwards
- University of California, Berkeley: Mary K. Healy

Research Papers: Possibilities

Research on the Composing Process
Ann Humes (SWRL Educational Research and Development)

Writing for Speakers of Other Languages
Huynh Dinh Te (California State University, Long Beach)

Professional Writing Programs and the Universe of Discourse
Joseph Williams (University of Chicago)

Remedial Writing Courses: Do They Limit More Than Foster Growth in Writing?
Mike Rose (University of California at Los Angeles)

A Status Report on Writing Assessment
Richard Stiggins (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory)

Closing Remarks: Challenges for the Future

Richard Clowes (University of Southern California)

Please send me __________ copies of *Writing: Policies, Problems, and Possibilities* at $5.00 each, plus 50¢ postage and handling per book. Enclosed is a check/money order for $__________ (payable to "SWRL"). California residents please add 6% sales tax (30¢).

Name ______________________________

Address ______________________________

____

Send to Accounting Department
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

PART II: STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

PART II

STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Introduction

A. Grades 2 and 3

B. Grades 5 and 6

PART II

STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Introduction

During January 1981, SWRL composition staff conducted a series of staff development workshops in written composition for teachers in the Curriculum Alignment project, funded by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Workshops were conducted in the two administrative areas in which the Curriculum Alignment project operates. Within each area, two separate after-school workshops were held: one for teachers in grades 2 and 3; one for teachers in grades 5 and 6. In making presentations at these workshops, staff drew on their vast knowledge of composition, based on SWRL's past and current NIE-supported research and development activities.

Each workshop consisted of three parts. The opening part discussed the results of the 1980 administration of the Survey of Essential Skills (SES). The SES is an assessment system developed by SWRL in cooperation with LAUSD (see Volume Three, Part I); it is administered yearly to students in grades 1-6. Bruce Cronnell described the results of the SES administration in the previous spring, with the content of the presentations depending on the teachers' grade levels.

After the opening discussion of the SES results, the teachers split into two groups for the next two parts of the workshop. Each part was presented twice so that all teachers could participate in small-group sessions.

One small-group presentation at each workshop was devoted to a more general view of the composing process and of writing instruction. For second- and third-grade teachers, Larry Gentry discussed writing in the primary grades, with particular emphasis on the writing-process research of Donald Graves. For fifth- and sixth-grade teachers, Ann Humes discussed helping students to write more and to write better. (This presentation was the basis for a later filmstrip--see Volume One, Part III--and for a later Instructional Improvement Digest--see this volume, Part III.)

The other small-group presentation at each workshop focused on a particular aspect of writing that was of concern to teachers (as expressed in pre-workshop questionnaires). Second- and third-grade teachers were concerned about their students' spelling. Consequently, Ann Humes discussed how teachers could supplement the spelling textbook in order to improve students' spelling performance. Fifth- and sixth-grade teachers were concerned about grammar and about having their students write fluently and in well-formed sentences. Thus, Joseph Lawlor's presentation focused on sentence combining--a technique for improving syntactic fluency without formal grammar instruction.

This part of the report consists of the texts of (approximately) what was said at these workshops, along with the handouts given to teachers. These presentations and handouts are given in two sections:

A. Grades 2 and 3

B. Grades 5 and 6

A. Grades 2 and 3

STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

GRADES 2 AND 3

I. 1980 Survey of Essential Skills - Composition: Results for grades 2 and 3 . . . . Bruce Cronnell

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: 1980 Survey of Essential Skills: Categories and skills for grades 2 and 3

II. Writing in the primary grades . . . . . . Larry Gentry

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: Writing in the primary grades

  Addendum: The writing-process research of Donald Graves
  --Handout: Writing workshops in the primary grades

III. Supplementing the spelling textbook . . . Ann Humes

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: Supplementing the spelling textbook

  C. Handout: An outline of English spelling

  D. Handouts: Spelling rules and spelling crossword puzzles

    1. Student worksheets
    2. Answer keys
    3. Questionnaire

  E. Handout: Elementary spelling: What's really taught

I

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS - COMPOSITION

RESULTS FOR GRADES 2 AND 3

Bruce Cronnell

A. Presentation

B. Handout: 1980 Survey of Essential Skills: Categories and skills for grades 2 and 3

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS - COMPOSITION

RESULTS FOR GRADES 2 AND 3

I'm sure you're all familiar with the Survey of Essential Skills. SWRL developed this test under a contract with the Los Angeles Unified School District, and we think it's a pretty good measure of student abilities. Today I'm going to talk about results on the Composition section, generally at the District level. You already know what your school results are (and I don't), so we thought you'd like to know what went on in the whole District. However, when I talk about the writing sample, I will be able to share some of the information we obtained from looking at a number of papers from a school in this Area (along with other schools).

First, let's look at the 1979 and the 1980 SES's. We think that the 1980 SES is much more difficult than the 1979 SES. (We also think it's a better test than the 1979 SES--both SWRL and the District learned a lot from the 1979 experience.)

Since the 1980 SES is more difficult than the 1979 SES, we naturally expected that scores would go down. But the scores usually went up--generally by 6-8 points at each grade level. I can't be sure of what this means, but I suspect that you teachers are putting more emphasis on writing, and naturally the students are doing better. The only grade level where there wasn't improvement was grade 3. We're not sure why this happened (although we're looking into it). We do understand why "good" and "acceptable" scores went down a little bit on the third-grade writing sample--it required more skill than in 1979. But overall, things got better in 1980, and we're expecting that things will get better in 1981. So I think you can all congratulate yourselves on the good job you're doing teaching composition.

Before I begin to talk about specific results, I want to say something about the nature of the SES. Since it's given to a large number of students (generally over 30,000) at each grade level, and since the District wants to know what the results are, the test must use multiple-choice items. Now, composition is really a constructive process--that is you produce things, not choose things. Thus, a multiple-choice test isn't really the best way to assess composition skills. But, given the testing constraints, it's the only way. Otherwise, teachers would have to score all the test--not just the writing sample. Therefore, some of the problems that students have on the SES may be because of the nature of the test, and it might be that they could do better if they constructed their answers rather than chose them.

Now for some more specific results. (Individual skills and sample items are given on the handout.)

Word Processing. Word Processing was very easy in second grade. Students had no problems with using adjectives and prepositions correctly. In third grade they had no problems with using nouns and pronouns correctly. However, they did have quite a bit of trouble using verbs correctly. They were supposed to choose the correct form of irregular past tenses. For instance, students didn't know that the correct form is grew, not growed or grewed.

Sentence Processing. Sentence Processing was a little more difficult in both grades. Second graders did OK in changing telling sentences into questions, but they had somewhat more trouble with inserting adjectives into the right place in a sentence. Perhaps they just weren't familiar with the format for the items. Third graders had to get subject-verb agreement correct. They didn't have too much trouble with does and is, but they did with regular verbs, perhaps because there's usually more emphasis on the irregular verbs.

Organizational Skills. Second graders had to classify words and items under the Organizational Skills category. This was very easy. In fact, they had near-perfect scores for classifying items. (Third graders were not assessed in this category.)

Dictionary/Reference Sources. The next category was Dictionary/Reference Sources. And this was generally a problem area. Second graders had no trouble alphabetizing letters, but their scores dropped dramatically when they had to alphabetize words by the first letter, especially when the first letters didn't come next to each other in the alphabet. Third graders had to alphabetize words by the second letter. They did better than second graders did with first letters, but still not very well.

Spelling. Spelling was a major category, and first, second, and third graders did well--about 80% correct in the District. Second graders did quite well spelling initial and final consonant clusters. They did nearly as well spelling final consonants and identifying rhyming words. But they had a lot of trouble spelling words with the long-vowel, final _e_ pattern. Ann Humes' presentation suggests some ideas for teaching this spelling.

Third graders did pretty well spelling consonant and vowel digraphs. They had more trouble choosing between -_s_ and -_es_ for plurals. And they had even more trouble choosing the correct verb suffix.

Mechanics in Writing. The Mechanics section was surprisingly difficult. We thought the capitalization and punctuation skills should be pretty easy for second and third graders. Second graders got only about 80% correct when using periods and question marks at the ends of sentences. They didn't even do that well capitalizing the word _I_. Maybe they just weren't used to the item format, since I'm sure they'd never write _I_ without capitalizing it.

Third graders may also have had difficulty with the Mechanics format, because I'm surprised at how low their scores were for capitalizing first and last names and for capitalizing the first word in a sentence. The writing samples that we read suggest that third graders can really capitalize names and sentences better than these multiple-choice items indicate.

Writing Sample. Finally we come to the third-grade Writing Sample. Overall, about 80% of the scores in the District were acceptable or better. I think this was quite good since the Writing Sample required students to compose a story and to use their best writing skills.

Students did quite well in writing a title and in describing the characters. They usually got the story off to a good start, but they more frequently had trouble ending it. We read over 200 of these stories, and a lot of them were really good--fun to read.

We noticed that indenting the first word of a paragraph is a problem for many students; of course, they probably see a lot of things that aren't indented, so this may confuse them. They usually did pretty well capitalizing the first word of each sentence and putting a period at the end of each sentence. But their spelling wasn't quite so hot. I think some of the reason was that they were trying to use words that they needed in the story, but that they didn't necessarily know how to spell. Finally, most students can write legibly (although there are a few who obviously need more work with their handwriting).

As I mentioned before, we read some of the Writing Samples that were sent to us. We also rescored them and compared our scores with the scores given by the original teachers. Not surprisingly, the scores were usually very much the same. This goes to show that the scoring system can be easily used to get reliable indications of how well children write.

For the most part we were quite pleased with the stories written by third graders. Of course, there were some very bad stories; a few students clearly need a lot of help in composition. But most of the stories showed us that third graders can indeed write. (And Larry Gentry's presentation suggests some ways to help your students become better writers.) Not only can most students write, but a number of them also are very good. I think you've all got your classes with a lot of writing ability that with the rest of the students that you can help writers.

you've all got several students in
ability that you can foster, along
you can help develop into better

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS - COMPOSITION

Categories and Skills for Grades 2 and 3

WORD PROCESSING

Grade 2

Selects and uses adjectives appropriately.

Selects and uses prepositions appropriately.

Grade 3

Selects and uses nouns appropriately. (singular/plural)

Selects and uses pronouns appropriately. (singular/plural; female/male)

Selects and uses verbs appropriately. (regular/irregular past tense; e.g., grew vs. growed, grewed)

SENTENCE PROCESSING

Grade 2

Expands simple sentences through the use of modifiers.

Example: Where does the word big go in the sentence?

The ↑○ boy ↑○ walked ↑○ home. ☐ big

Manipulates sentences through use of transformation. (telling sentence → question)

Grade 3

Constructs and identifies sentences in which the subject and verb agree. (forms of do and be vs. forms of regular verbs)

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Grade 2

Classifies items and/or words.

(no Organizational Skills assessed in Grade 3)

DICTIONARY/REFERENCE SOURCES

Grade 2

Alphabetizes letters.

Alphabetizes words by the first letter.

Grade 3

Alphabetizes words by the second letter.

SPELLING

Grade 2

Identifies and spells rhyming words.

Identifies and spells final consonant sounds.

Identifies and spells initial/final consonant clusters.

Identifies and spells long vowel/final e pattern.

Grade 3

Identifies and spells consonant digraphs.

Identifies and spells vowel digraphs.

Forms plurals by adding s and es.

Spells new words by adding s, ed, ing to base words.

MECHANICS IN WRITING

Grade 2

Capitalizes the personal pronoun I.

Example: Last week i went to the store.

Uses period to end sentence.

Example: This is my best friend___

. , none of these

Uses question mark to end sentence.

Grade 3

Capitalizes first letters in names of persons. (first and last)

Example: Next week we are going to visit fred.

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ

Capitalizes first letter in first word in sentence.

WRITING SAMPLE

(no Writing Sample in Grade 2)

Grade 3

Content

Writes a title for a paragraph.

Describes characters.

Writes a story line that is appropriate for the picture.

Includes an appropriate conclusion.

Shows creativity and originality.

Form

Indents first word of paragraph.

Capitalizes first word of sentences.

Includes periods at the ends of sentences.

Spells correctly.

Writes legibly.

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

II

WRITING IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

Larry Gentry

A. Presentation

B. Handout: Writing in the primary grades

Addendum: The writing-process research of Donald Graves

--Handout: Writing workshops in the primary grades

WRITING IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

Larry Gentry

I would like to share a few ideas with you on how you might be able to work more writing into your curriculum. I know this is tough to do when you have a tight schedule, but research shows that it pays off. In fact, in one recent study, the teachers involved took time away from reading to work in more writing, and guess what happened? Both reading and writing scores went up!

If we do intend to teach writing, however, we have to be careful about what we are really teaching. For example, writing is often equated with language arts study: grammar, spelling, workbook activities, etc. Research indicates that these activities, in and of themselves, do not do much for the ability to write fluent prose. There is one language arts activity, however, that is directly related to the development of writing ability--writing.

Now I'd like to take a few minutes to introduce you to a relatively new way of looking at writing instruction--a way that will help you focus on what your students are actually doing when they write and on the areas in which you can help them develop. To do this, we have to draw a distinction between product and process. The product is what people write; the process is how people write. Most language arts education is product-based; it is concerned with how correct the final product is. The feedback students get about their writing comes long after they have finished and forgotten it, rather than at the time they need it--while they're writing.

What I'm suggesting that you do is focus your writing instruction on the student during the process. There are three stages upon which to focus--the prewriting stage, the writing stage, and the postwriting stage. (In reality, the act of writing is a cyclical rather than a linear process, but for purposes of instruction, it's convenient to think in terms of stages.) Prewriting refers to what students do before they write; the writing stage is the actual writing itself, and postwriting is what happens after writing.

Prewriting

Let's consider for a moment what happens during the prewriting stage. This is the stage at which the writer must decide what to write about and then develop some preliminary ideas about how to transfer thought from mind to paper. It's a type of rehearsal process. Kids need time to get ready for writing. They need to think things through. If you introduce a topic, give ample time for class discussion. As key words come up during the discussion, write them on the board. Drawing is another important way of rehearsing for some kids. It helps them clarify their thoughts and serves as sort of a reference source for their stories.

Probably the biggest problem in the prewriting stage is generating ideas. One way of doing this is through word associations. If, for instance, you have a general topic in mind, you might start out by writing a word on the board and asking kids to furnish related words. For example, here's the word rain. What other words come to mind when you think of rain?

Another way of generating ideas is by asking appropriate questions. If you're doing a descriptive story, children should be aware of the various qualities of the object. What does it look like? What does it sound like? A list of these and similar questions is provided in your handout. If the children are writing a story or writing about a particular event, you should ask such questions as: What happened first? What happened next? When and where did it happen? Again, your handout lists such questions. These questions can be posted in the room to remind students of the types of things they should be asking themselves as they write. Ideas can often be generated by focusing class discussion on interesting photographs or pictures--especially those that show people or animals in unusual or humorous situations.

My final suggestion involves the use of story-starters. The teacher writes a thought-provoking phrase on the board such as, "If I were invisible . . .," and asks students to write with that thought as their lead-in. The second page of your handout has a list of story-starters. This list is merely suggestive; I'm sure many of you have personal favorites that have worked well in your classes.

Writing

Now once students get their idea, how should they go about putting it into words? First of all, I would like to recommend that you get your kids used to writing more than one draft. They should learn to see their first draft as a "discovery" draft--a place where they are free to make mistakes and mess up the page. In this way they learn to experiment with words and language without fear of being wrong. In order to do this, you should have them write on every other line. That way they can cross out words, insert words, and make corrections. This is also a good way of getting away from the eraser syndrome--instead of erasing, they can cross out their mistakes. Another thing they should be able to do on their first draft is use invented or incomplete spellings. Some researchers suspect that one reason for stilted and unimaginative writing is that students are afraid to take risks with spelling words that they are unsure of. Most children at this level know enough phonics to get something down on paper. The correct spelling can be furnished later.

Postwriting

When the first draft is done, students are ready to revise. (Actually, some of them probably made some revisions as they were writing the first draft. Remember what I said about writing being a cyclical process?) At this stage of development, revision is usually one of two things. For all of your students, it should include writing a second draft--even if it's simply recopying to correct spellings and improve printing or handwriting. This is not a waste of time. It involves many of the skills that you've been teaching--reading, spelling, handwriting--and it helps students understand that decent writing evolves through a process. Some students will be able to go beyond proofreading to more important types of revision such as adding-on. The types of questions that we talked about earlier can be asked again at this stage. "When did that happen? What happened after your brother fell off his bike?" These types of questions can be asked by teachers while they're circulating through the room. Most stories at this stage are not very long and can be read by the teacher in a minute or less. Whenever you take time to respond to a piece of writing and make suggestions, you are holding an individual writing conference. It doesn't take long to provide feedback and suggestions. The important thing is that it happens while students are engaged in the process rather than a few days later when they get their papers back. Another technique for encouraging children to revise their papers is to ask them to read their stories orally to the class or a small group. Those who listen to the story can be instructed to ask questions about the story itself so that the writer can see which questions are left unanswered.

You'll notice that I've tried to focus primarily on content. I believe that if we want students to view writing as a means of communicating ideas, they have to view content and ideas as the most important aspects of writing. Matters of language and spelling are important too, but they should take a backseat to content until the student is ready to prepare the final draft.

A few words about the postwriting phase: it's important that kids see their personal writing as something that has value. One way of doing this has already been mentioned--oral reading to other students. You may want to give them the opportunity to do this after the piece is finished, too. I'm sure many of you post stories on the walls in the room; that's always an excellent idea. Still another way of giving the students a sense of permanence and value about their writing is to bind each student's best stories with some sort of pasteboard binding and put them in the classroom library.

I hope I've been able to give you some ideas that you can take back to your classrooms. Before you leave, however, I would like you to take note of the bibliography on the final page of your handout. This contains references to the recent work of Donald Graves and his colleagues. Graves is probably the best contemporary authority in the area of writing instruction in the primary grades. All of the articles listed were written with teachers in mind. I think you'll find any or all of them provocative and very helpful in your work with children.

WRITING IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

A. Process vs. product

B. Generating ideas

  1. Word-associating

  2. Probing questions

    a. Descriptions: What does it look like?
    What does it sound like?
    What does it smell like?
    What does it taste like?
    What does it feel like?

    b. Stories: What happened first?
    What happened next? Next?
    What happened last?
    When did it happen?
    Where did it happen?
    Who did it happen to?

  3. Stimulating pictures

  4. Story-starters (see attached list)

C. Writing

  1. First draft as "discovery" draft

  2. Writing on every other line

  3. Invented and incomplete spellings

D. Revising

  1. Responding to content first; encouraging adding on

    a. Individual conferences

    b. Oral reading to elicit questions from class

  2. Helping with language and spelling on final draft

E. Writing for an audience

  1. Sharing and reading stories

  2. Typing and binding stories

STORY-STARTERS

1. I wish . . .
2. If I were . . .
3. Someday I will . . .
4. I used to think . . .
5. You would never believe . . .
6. Once I thought I saw . . .
7. If I had a million dollars . . .
8. The funniest thing happened when . . .
9. If I were only one inch tall . . .
10. If I were twenty feet tall . . .
11. I was really happy when . . .
12. I was really scared when . . .
13. If I were an animal, I would be . . .
14. If I were invisible . . .
15. If I could be on TV . . .
16. If I had a magic wand . . .
17. When the flying saucer landed . . .
18. My best friend is . . .
19. The worst food in the world is . . .
20. If I lived a long time ago . . .

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

A READER'S GUIDE TO THE WRITING-PROCESS RESEARCH OF DONALD GRAVES

Graves, Donald H. "Let's Get Rid of the Welfare Mess in the Teaching of Writing." Language Arts, September, 1976.

Graves, Donald H. "We Won't Let Them Write." Language Arts, May 1978.

Graves, Donald H. "What Children Show Us About Revision." Language Arts, March, 1979.

Graves, Donald H. "A New Look at Writing Research." Language Arts, November-December, 1980.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. "Children Learn the Writer's Craft." Language Arts, February, 1980.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. "The Craft of Writing." Teacher, November-December, 1980.

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

THE WRITING-PROCESS RESEARCH OF DONALD GRAVES

Larry Gentry

It is common to speak of the basic school subjects as the 3R's--readin', ritin', and 'rithmetic. Two of the 3R's, however, reading and arithmetic, always seem to grab the lion's share of everyone's attention. This is true whether we're talking about classroom time, educational research, or federal money for education. All of us are familiar with the tremendous amount of time and energy and money that has been spent in trying to find the one "best" method of teaching kids to read--and we're all familiar with the big flap over whether it's better to teach the "New Math" or computation skills. But what about the second R--writing? For some reason or another, writing has always taken a backseat to reading and math. One recent study, for example, showed that for every $3,000 that schools spend on reading, only $1 is spent on writing. The same study showed that of all the money spent on educational research, less than one-tenth of one percent was spent on writing research.

Why is this true? Is it because we already know everything there is to know about teaching writing and about how children learn to write? I don't think so. We've all read the horror stories about the increasing numbers of high school graduates who have to take remedial English classes when they get to college. And you may recall that, just a few years ago, Newsweek Magazine had a big cover article entitled "Why Johnny Can't Write." Or is it because we've all been taught to think of writing as nothing more than the sum of its parts? Once we learn handwriting, spelling, grammar, and how to write a topic sentence--we know how to write.

Fortunately, in the last few years this situation has started to change. A few people have begun to take a good, hard look at writing instruction and how it might be improved. One way they have done this is by shifting their focus from writing as a product to writing as a process. What's the difference between these two approaches--product and process? When we look at writing as a product, we're looking at words, sentences, paragraphs, essays. We have said to our students--"This is how you produce the correct form." We then evaluate the students on how close they come to reproducing that form. When we look at writing as a process, however, we've shifted our focus from the finished paper to something just as important--but often overlooked--the student. The process approach looks at writing as human behavior--or rather as a set of behaviors. It assumes that the student is doing some important things during the process of writing and what the teacher does to help the students during this process is just as important--if not more important--than what the teacher does after the paper is finished.

As I said, this type of research is fairly new, and not many people have been involved in it. Most of what's been done so far has been done with older students--usually in high school or college. But one person has done some very important work in this area with children in the primary grades, and I would like to spend some time talking about him and about his research with young students. The person's name is Donald Graves. He is a professor at the University of New Hampshire, but quite unlike most professors of education, he is more comfortable in a first grade classroom than in a university library.

Since becoming a professional researcher, Graves has spent most of his time studying the writing processes of young children--that is, children in the first four years of school. He is generally considered to be the expert in this particular area. Although he has been involved in a number of writing research projects, the most important is one that he just recently finished. In this particular study, he and two other full-time researchers spent two years at an elementary school in New Hampshire. They selected eight first graders and eight third graders for an intensive case study. They followed each one of these students every school day for two years--doing a very precise analysis of how these children learned to write. Although his final report on this project isn't finished, he wrote a number of preliminary reports that have provided us with some very important information.

What are some of the things that Graves has to tell us? First of all, he would encourage us to recognize that every child has something important to say. Writing will become important to children when they feel that writing is a way of expressing their own personal thoughts and ideas. This means that teachers should encourage children to select their own topics. It's much easier for children to get excited about their daily joys and problems than it is for them to get excited about "Our Trip to the Tide-Pools."

He would also tell us (as was suggested earlier) to stop placing so much emphasis on the final product and start paying more attention to the process that children go through as they write. Graves would say that, in order to produce an effective piece of writing, children must go through the same cycle that professional writers go through. First they must rehearse their writing, then they must compose, and finally they must revise. The normal way of thinking about writing is to focus on the second of these three cycles--composition. But, if we give the matter some thought, we realize that rehearsal and revision are just as important. Professional writers don't just sit down at a typewriter and start pecking away. They have a pretty good idea of where their thoughts are taking them. At the same time, it is a rare writer who can say exactly the right thing on the first draft. A finished manuscript has usually gone through many revisions before it's ready for publication.

These two aspects of the writing process--rehearsal and revision--are seldom given much attention in school writing. But Graves has shown that, once they are incorporated into our writing programs, we can expect children to become more effective and fluent writers. Let's talk about rehearsal for a moment. Try to remember the last time you did a piece of serious writing. Perhaps it was a report or a term paper. Before you started writing, you had to organize your facts and ideas and figure out how you were going to structure your basic message. You didn't know how each sentence would be phrased or which words would be used, but you spent some time in developing an overall picture of the finished product. We must allow our students to do the same thing. Even when they've selected their basic topics, they need to figure out how it should be presented. Primary children often do this through drawing. As they draw a picture of a particular object or event, their story begins to emerge and put itself together. Others need to talk about their topic with the teacher or with other students before they start writing. Others just need time to think and organize their thoughts.

Just as we must give students a chance to rehearse their writing, we must also give them a chance to revise their writing. No--let me put it another way. We must insist that they revise their writing. One of the things that discourages a lot of adults from writing is the idea that good writers are able to produce letter-perfect prose without any effort. That is a myth--and we should tell our students that it's a myth. Producing a piece of good writing is like shaping a piece of clay. Our first attempts are generally very crude, and it is only as we smooth out the rough parts and make the necessary refinements that we become pleased with the product. Children should be taught to see their first drafts as "discovery" drafts--a way of sketching their thoughts and laying the groundwork for the finished product--not as the final product itself.

A couple of years ago Graves conducted a study for the Ford Foundation. They wanted him to look at the general status of writing in the United States and to tie this in with how writing was being taught in the schools. He discovered some things that give us who are involved in education a great deal to think about. He found out that, in general, adults were writing less than ever before. The post office data he collected showed a sharp decline in personal letter writing and projected a further 8% decline over the next five years. Most adults he interviewed didn't like to write. Most of their writing was confined to shopping lists, notes, and short memos. Perhaps most important for us is the fact that they viewed writing as a form of punishment. If you've taken a class in educational psychology, then you know the difference between reinforcement and punishment. When a student's behavior is followed by positive reinforcement, that behavior is likely to occur again. When the behavior is followed by punishment, that behavior is likely to be avoided in the future. We know that most adults and most students don't like to write--could this be because traditional writing instruction has more punishing consequences than it does reinforcing consequences? Think about your own school experiences with writing. What do you associate them with? Term papers? Essay tests? Book reports? How did you feel when the teacher desecrated your best work with a red pencil--searching out every spelling error and every error in grammar--and never once responding to what you were trying to say? How many times did you have to write "I will not chew gum in school"? 100 times? 500 times? Unless you were a super speller, a super handwriter, or a super storyteller, you probably received very little positive reinforcement when it came to writing.

How does Donald Graves suggest that we overcome all of these obstacles to good writing? How can we reorganize to set up an effective writing program in our classrooms? If you will pick up the handouts that were given to you at the beginning of this session, I would like to elaborate on a few of the ideas that we have adapted from Graves.

You will notice that the very first point (number 1) under Organizing for Writing says, "Provide at least 30 minutes a day for writing-workshop." The words "writing-workshop" are put in there to differentiate it from the other types of writing that your students may do during the day. This 30 minutes is not for social studies reports, grammar exercises, spelling, language arts workbooks, or other school-assigned writing. This is for serious, pupil-selected written expression. Point number 2: "Students may be engaged in any of the following aspects of the writing process: Prewriting (that's rehearsal), Composing, or Revising." This of course, is the toughest part in terms of classroom management. Since students aren't used to writing, they have to adjust to it. You have to crack down on those who see it as a "goofing-off" period and make sure that their activities are related to whatever writing project they've chosen to do.

Point number 3: "Give each student two folders: one for keeping work-in-progress and one for keeping finished stories." In parentheses it says, "a single story may take several weeks." Now we're getting down to the nitty-gritty. When you adopt this way of teaching writing, you've taken your focus off of the final product. You don't say, "For the next 30 minutes we will have writing workshop. I will expect a finished story before you go out to recess." Most writers can't write like that--except perhaps the professional newspaper reporter who gets paid a lot more than you or me for working under that kind of pressure.

When we adopt this approach, what Graves calls the process-conference approach, we have shifted our attention to the process that the students are going through as they write. Your prolific writers may turn out several stories in the course of the year. One first grader that Graves observed did more than 100 in a nine-month period. Others will struggle and struggle just to turn out two or three. The more they have to focus on the mechanics of writing--spelling and punctuation and grammar--the harder it will be for them to express themselves adequately. If you'll skip down to number 5, at the bottom of the first page, you will find one way of handling this problem. "Respond only to content on first draft attempts." In using this approach, we don't reach first for the red pencil. When the students bring us their first drafts, we try (and I know it's hard) to ignore all the errors we see and try instead to find out what they are really trying to say. We become resource people--directing the student to new resources and providing ideas that might improve the content. On later drafts, as points number 6 and 7 suggest, we will direct the students' attention to such matters as language and spelling.

The whole idea behind this type of approach is to turn writing into a non-threatening activity. When the students know that the teacher is going to treat their writing, no matter how primitive, with the respect it deserves, writing ceases to be punishment. Points numbered 1 and 2 under "Postwriting Activities" add another important dimension to the writing program. Some of you are probably doing something like this already. Students should feel that their writing has value and permanence. They should never be allowed to throw a finished story away. Stories should be kept in a folder or some of them may be tacked up in the room somewhere. After a student has written several stories, the student should select the best one for pasteboard binding. You should make it a goal to have at least one pasteboard book from every student in the class during the year.

On the last page of this handout I have prepared a short bibliography of some of the articles that Don Graves and his colleagues have written. You will notice that most of them have been published in Language Arts, a journal that should be available to you in your professional library. If you are interested in pursuing Graves' work in more detail, I think you will find these articles very helpful.

WRITING-WORKSHOPS IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

Organizing for Writing

1. Provide at least thirty minutes a day for writing-workshop.

2. During workshop, students may be engaged in any of the following aspects of the writing process:

    (a) Prewriting activities - organizing their thoughts and/or gathering information about their topic by drawing, discussing, reading, etc.

    (b) Composing - writing about their topic.

    (c) Revising - changing content, language, spelling, or mechanics to meet the needs of an interested audience. Students should learn that professional writers spend most of their time revising what they've already written. A "good" story at any level usually grows out of several drafts.

3. Give each student two folders: one for keeping work-in-progress (a single story may take several weeks) and one for keeping finished stories.

Teaching Suggestions

1. Encourage students to select their own topics. If they have trouble, ask them to list five possible topics and choose the one they like best.

2. The first line of a story often sets the tone for what follows. Help students write interesting leads by asking them to write several possible openings and then select their favorite.

3. Show children how to revise by writing a group story (or lead) on the board. Ask children how it can be improved. Don't erase, but cross-out, add-on, and substitute as if you were writing in ink.

4. Hold a writing-process conference with each student every five to ten days. Ask student to show you his or her "work-in-progress" folder. This folder should contain all of the drafts for the story then in progress.

5. Respond only to content on first draft attempts. This should be thought of as a "discovery" draft. Help student develop information by asking questions, directing to appropriate resources, etc.

6. On later drafts, respond to language as well as content. Spelling and mechanics can wait until the story nears completion.

7. In dealing with errors of spelling and/or mechanics, try to focus on no more than one or two prevalent types of error during any one conference.

Postwriting Activities

1. Students should feel that their writing has value and permanence. Stories should not be discarded, but should be kept in a folder that either student or teacher may maintain.

2. Each time a student completes his or her fifth story, have the student select one for pasteboard binding. These should be placed in the class library and may be read aloud to the rest of the class.

Prepared by
Larry Gentry
SWRL Educational Research & Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, California
(213)598-7661

III

SUPPLEMENTING THE SPELLING TEXTBOOK

Ann Humes

A. Presentation

B. Handout: Supplementing the spelling textbook

C. Handout: An outline of English spelling (Appendix A)

D. Handouts: Spelling rules and spelling crossword puzzles

1. Student worksheets (Appendix B)
2. Answer keys (Appendix C)
3. Questionnaire (Appendix D)

E. Handout: Elementary spelling: What's really taught (Appendix E)

SUPPLEMENTING THE SPELLING TEXTBOOK

Ann Humes

Over the past ten years, SWRL has done a lot of work with spelling. We've researched student spelling difficulties and, more importantly, we've developed and tested instructional materials for spelling. From our classroom experience in teaching spelling, we've learned a great deal about how students can learn to spell better.

Another SWRL activity in the past few years has involved looking at most of the major spelling programs used in the United States. Generally, they're pretty poor--they don't do a very good job of teaching spelling. Many of you probably use Basic Goals in Spelling by Kottmeyer and Claus. Basic Goals in Spelling is about the best program around. But it still has problems, so I'm going to mention a few techniques for improving on Basic Goals in Spelling. These techniques can improve your students' spelling. If you are not using Basic Goals in Spelling, these techniques will still help your students because most spelling programs have the same problems as the Kottmeyer textbooks.

Four problems recur in Basic Goals in Spelling:

1. Generally the spelling rules are not given. Students can be helped to spell better if they know exactly what the rule is. We've seen this practice work effectively--even with kindergarten students.

2. There's very little oral practice. When you spell, you move from the pronunciation of a word to the writing of the word, so it helps to be aware of how the word sounds. Many spelling errors are the result of not being aware of the pronunciation of a word.

3. There is little focus on word parts; most of the focus is on whole words. Students learn to spell better if they can focus on part of a word at a time before they have to spell the whole word. Focusing on word parts helps students to generalize the spelling rules so that they can spell other words.

To demonstrate the importance of focusing on word parts, I'm going to have you spell a word you haven't memorized--one that you probably don't read or use very often. As you spell the word, think about what you are doing because this is what your students must be able to do. The word is "ephemerides"; spell "ephemerides." Most likely this word didn't flash in your mind as a whole word; you had to approach it by spelling the word parts.

Practice in focusing on word parts can also improve students' word attack skills for reading: When students spell words, they move from the sounds to the letters; when they read new words, they move from the letters to the sounds.

4. A great deal of the practice involves copying. Some of the exercises in Kottmeyer appear to be asking students to spell words from pictures or from sentence cues, but the target word is printed on the page. If it is on the page, the odds are that students will copy. There's nothing wrong with copying as a way of helping with spelling, but if students' practice is mostly copying, they won't learn to spell on their own--which is what we want them to do. And when students spend all week copying in their workbooks, they are not prepared for a dictated spelling test because they haven't spelled words on their own.

To overcome these four problems, several approaches can be used. To exemplify these supplementary activities, I will refer to unit 2 in level 3 of Basic Goals in Spelling (which teaches the aCe spelling), and unit 16 in level 3 (which teaches the ou and ow spellings). However, the same kind of activities can be used to work with other spellings.

1. Presenting the rule. Kottmeyer introduces the spelling rule for /ou/ in this way:

> We show the vowel sound in loud and crowd like this: /ou/.
>
> We use ou and ow to spell the vowel sound in words like loud and crowd.
>
> We say /ou/. We write ou, ow.*

As you will note, this introduction to /ou/ does not present the spelling rule. To present the rule, you can write how, town, and growl on the board. Say these words and have students listen for the vowel sound. Explain that these words have the /ou/ sound and that /ou/ is spelled with ow at the end of a word and before n and l when n or l is the last letter in the word. (Incidentally, Basic Goals in Spelling uses an exception to this rule to present the spelling--the word crowd.)

You may then provide practice on this part of the rule or present the rest of the rule. To introduce this part of the rule, write loud and flower on the board. Explain that /ou/ is spelled with ou in the middle of the word unless /ou/ comes before a vowel letter. Then it is spelled with ow.

---

*Basic Goals in Spelling, Level 3, p. 79.

Students should not be required to memorize the rule. However, you can remind them of the rule during spelling practice, and/or you can post the rule somewhere in the classroom so that students can refer to it.

To help you with the spelling rules, you can take with you this Outline of English Spelling, which emphasizes the spellings commonly taught in the primary grades. (See Appendix A.)

2. Providing oral practice. You can give students appropriate sound discrimination practice by having them listen for the vowel sounds in words to determine whether they are the same or different sounds:

> "Do these words have the same vowel sound or different vowel sounds?" (e.g., hat-hate, cap-cape, late-name)

You can also ask students to discriminate between long- and short-vowel sounds:

> "Do these words have a long-vowel sound or a short-vowel sound?" (e.g., cape, cap, name, same, Sam)

3. Focusing on word parts. One way to focus on word parts is to write words on the board and have students identify the spelling of one part. For example, you can write words on the board and have students identify the vowel spelling

and the consonant(s) or vowel that follows the /ou/ sound; e.g., now, crown, flower, proud, howl. You can also have students spell the sound in the word.

> "How do you spell the vowel sound in name?" (Repeat for other words, such as plate, sat.)

You can also have students spell the individual sounds in the word and then the whole word:

> "How do you spell the first sound in same?"
> "How do you spell the vowel sound in same?"
> "How do you spell the last sound in same?"
> "How do you spell same?"

4. Providing non-copying tasks. One of the ways you can give students practice other than copying is to dictate the words before the weekly test. Now this exercise is not a pre-test; it is practice. This activity can even be done in small groups, with a student "administering" the practice.

   Another approach is to use the exercise noted above for focusing on word parts, using words not in the lesson. You can also use pictures and sentence fill-ins for non-lesson words. Using words not in the spelling workbook will make students do something more than memorize words--it will make them generate spellings and focus on spelling rules that can be generalized to spell a large number of words.

These approaches will give you a few ways to supplement spelling books to overcome their problems. Another important consideration is to make spelling fun. We have a set of spelling puzzles that you can take with you to help make spelling fun. (See Appendix B.) You can duplicate these puzzles and give them to students at the end of the appropriate units because the puzzles are organized by spellings, such as the ou and ow spellings for /ou/. On one side of the page is instruction on the spelling rule in simplified language. This instruction can provide you information on presenting the spelling rule. On the reverse side is the puzzle.

Since teachers should have fun, too, you can complete the puzzles yourself before you give them to students. Then you'll be prepared if you don't know the word suggested by one of the clues. To help with that problem, we have answer keys for all the puzzles. (See Appendix C.) You can duplicate these answer keys if you wish to have students check their own puzzles.

We hope you will use these crossword puzzles. If you do use them, we would appreciate your providing us with some information about how they worked; we can use this information to help improve the puzzles for use by others. Here is a brief questionnaire to fill out when you use the puzzles and an envelope to use to send the questionnaire back. (See Appendix D.)

The last handout is a reprint of an article Bruce Cronnell and I wrote for the Elementary School Journal. (See Appendix E.) It discusses current problems with spelling textbooks, such as those we have discussed here, and explains the procedures we used in studying textbooks.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the handouts or the techniques described for supplementing the spelling textbook.

SUPPLEMENTING THE SPELLING TEXTBOOK

a...e	ou, ow
1. Presenting the spelling.	
Write mad and made on the board. Say the words and note the difference in the vowel sounds. Explain that the vowel sound in made is called a long-vowel sound; it is the same as the name of the letter a. Explain that /ā/ is spelled with a and then e at the end of the word. Explain that the vowel sound in mad is a short-vowel sound and that it is spelled with a single vowel letter.	Write how, town, and growl on the board. Say these words and have students listen for the vowel sound. Explain that these words have the /ou/ sound and that /ou/ is spelled with ow at the end of a word and before n and l when n or l is the last letter in the word. Write loud and flower on the board. Explain that /ou/ is spelled with ou in the middle of the word unless /ou/ comes before a vowel letter. Then it is spelled with ow.
2. Providing oral practice.	
Give students sound discrimination practice: a. "Do these words have the same vowel sound or different vowel sounds?" (e.g., hat-hate, cap-cape, late-name) b. "Do these words have a long-vowel sound or a short-vowel sound?" (e.g., cape, cap, name, same) c. Write words on the board and have students identify words with a long-vowel sound; e.g., cape, cap, tame, fate, fat. d. Write words on the board and have students identify words with the /ā/ sounds; e.g., tape, tap, fame, fan, feet, fate.	Give students sound discrimination practice: a. "Do these words have the same vowel sound or different vowel sounds?" (Say word pairs; e.g., town-tone.) b. Write words on the board and have students identify words with the /ou/ sounds; e.g., growl, grow, town, tone, brown, power, home.

3. Focusing on word parts.

a. Have students spell the sound in the word:

"How do you spell the vowel sound in name?"

Repeat for other words; e.g., plate, sat.

b. Have students spell the individual sounds in the whole word:

"How do you spell the first sound in same?"
"How do you spell the vowel sound in same?"
"How do you spell the last sound in same?"
"How do you spell same?"

Use words not in the lesson, as well as those in the lesson, for the above exercises.

a. Write words on the board and have students identify the vowel spelling and the consonant(s) or vowel that follows the /ou/ sound; e.g., now, crown, flower, proud, howl.

b. Have students spell the sound in the word:

"How do you spell the vowel sound in found?"

Repeat for other words; e.g., howl, tone, flower, brown.

c. Have students spell the individual sounds in the whole word:

"How do you spell the first sound in found?"
"How do you spell the vowel sound in found?"
"How do you spell the last two sounds in found?"
"How do you spell found?"

Use words not in the lesson, as well as those in the lesson, for the above exercises.

4. Providing non-copying tasks.

a. Dictate words before the test.

b. Repeat exercises in previous section, making sure words are not in front of students and using words not in the lesson.

c. Use pictures or sentences to have students spell words not in the lesson.

a. Dictate words before the test.

b. Repeat exercises in previous section, making sure words are not in front of students and using words not in the lesson.

c. Use pictures or sentences to have students spell words not in the lesson.

APPENDIX A

AN OUTLINE OF ENGLISH SPELLING

Prepared by

SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

The following is a brief and somewhat simplified outline of the major rules of English spelling, with emphasis on those spellings commonly taught in the primary grades. It is not complete, but serves as an introduction to spelling.

VOWEL SPELLINGS

Short Vowels (generally spelled with one letter)

/a/ - a: pass

/e/ - e, less frequently ea: bed, head

/i/ - i: slip (infrequent, y: myth)

/o/ - o: pot

/u/ - u, less frequently o or o...e (generally before m, n, v, or th) and ou: but, son, come, young

/ô/ - o, a before l, au, aw finally: long, ball, sauce, saw (infrequent: augh, ough: caught, thought) In some dialects, /o/ is used instead of /ô/.

/u̇/ - oo (particularly before d or k) or u: look, pull

Long Vowels (commonly spelled with two letters)

/ā/ - a...e or ai, ay finally, a in polysyllabic words: date, rain, day, table (infrequent: ei, and eigh, ey, finally: veil, weigh, they)

/ē/ - ea or ee, y finally in polysyllabic words: heat, tree, silly (infrequent: e...e, ie, ei, i...e, e, i, and e, ey finally: scene, thief, deceive, machine, meter, museum, stadium, he, valley)

/ī/ - i...e, i before consonant clusters and in polysyllabic words, y finally, less frequently igh finally or before t: mine, mind, tiger, cry, light

(infrequent: y...e, y, ie finally: type, cycle, pie)

/ō/ - o...e or oa, o before consonant clusters and in polysyllabic words, ow finally: hope, boat, most, open, yellow

(infrequent: ou, and o, oe finally: mould, go, hoe)

/ū/ or /yū/ - oo (for /ū/ only), u...e, u in polysyllabic words: boot, cute, super

(infrequent: ui, eu, ou, and ew, ue finally: fruit, feud, group, new, blue)

/oi/ - oi, oy finally: boil, boy

/ou/ - ou, ow finally: found, cow

Vowels plus r

/är/ - ar: star

/ôr/ - ore, oar, or: more, board, torn. (After /w/, /ôr/ is spelled with ar: warm, quart.)

/ėr/ - er, ur, ir, or after w: her, hurt, bird, word

(infrequent: ear: earn)

/er/ - are, air: stare, air

/ir/ - eer, ear: deer, fear

/u̇r/ or /yu̇r/ - oor (for /u̇r/ only), ure: poor, pure

The Unstressed Vowel /ə/ (schwa) may be spelled with any single vowel letter: lapel, wallet, April, gallop, circus.

CONSONANT SPELLINGS

Consonant sounds with one primary spelling (in addition to the doubling described below)

The sounds /b, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, t, v, w, y/ are spelled with the corresponding letters: b, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, t, v, w, y.

Several consonant sounds are spelled with digraphs (two-letter spellings):

/th/ and /*th*/ - th: thick, then

/sh/ - sh: shoot

/hw/ - wh: when (For speakers who do not use /hw/, this is an alternate spelling of /w/.)

/ch/ - ch: chin

The final cluster /ks/ is spelled x: box, six.

Consonant sounds with variant spellings (in addition to the doubling described below)

/k/ - c before a, o, u or a consonant: cat, cold, cute, cream, act

k before e, i or y: keep, kiss, sky

k at the end of a word after a long vowel: seek, strike, make

k at the end of a word after a consonant: milk, bark, honk

/kw/ - is always spelled qu

/s/ - s at the beginning of a word: see, sit

c (sometimes) before e, i, y: cent, cinch, cycle

c(e) or s(e) at the end of a word: ice, dance, base, else

/z/ - z at the beginning of a word: zone, zero

s(e) or z(e) at the end of a word: wise, please, haze, breeze

/j/ - j at the beginning of a word: jewel, jam

g (sometimes) before e, i, y: gem, giant, gym

g(e) at the end of a word: huge, large

/ng/ - ng at the end of a word: ring

n elsewhere: thank

Doubled consonants

1. Consonants (except v and x) are doubled when following a single-letter spelling of a short vowel and preceding another vowel or le: bubble, paddle, waffle, giggle, follow, summer, funnel, happy, merry, butter.

   The doubled forms of c (or k), ch, and j are ck, tch, and dg, respectively:

   pickle, hatchet, midget

   Note: This rule has numerous exceptions, e.g., copy, wagon.

2. /k, f, s, z, ch, j, l/ occurring at the end of a word following a single-letter spelling of a short vowel are spelled with a doubled consonant:

   lick, puff, mess, buzz, match, edge, (dge is the doubled form finally), tall.

Some foreign consonant spellings

/k/ - ch: chlorine, chorus

/f/ - ph: phone, graph

/š/ - ch: chef, chauffeur

Some infrequent consonant spellings

/g/ - gu(e): guest, league

/s/ - sc: scene

/s/ - st: castle

/m/ - mb: limb

/n/ - kn: knee, know

/r/ - wr: writer

Word final /v/ is spelled ve: give, twelve.

Word final /*th*/ is spelled the: breathe.

SUFFIXATION RULES

Suffixes are commonly added directly to the ends of root words (e.g., *trying*, *played*, *soften*), but there are a few special rules. Many dictionaries provide good descriptions of these rules. The following is a summary of some major points.

1. When the root word ends with a consonant and *e* and the suffix begins with a vowel, the *e* is dropped, e.g., *driving*, *hoped*.
2. When the root word ends with a single vowel letter plus a single consonant letter, the final consonant is doubled, e.g., *hopped*. In multisyllable words, this happens only if the last syllable is stressed (accented), e.g., occu*rr*ing (but murmu*r*ing).
3. When the root word ends with a consonant plus *y* and the suffix does not begin with *i*, the *y* changes to *i*, e.g., happ*i*ness, tr*i*ed.
4. The suffix for plural and for third person singular is generally spelled with -*s*. After *s*, *z*, *sh*, *ch*, or *x*, it is spelled with -*es*.

Selected Bibliography

Brengelman, F. *The English language*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970. Chapters 7 and 8.

Chomsky, C. Reading, writing, and phonology. *Harvard Educational Review*, 1970, *40*, 287-309.

Cronnell, B. Black English and spelling. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 1979, *13*, 81-90.

Cronnell, B. Spelling English as a second language. In M. Celce-Murcia and L. McIntosh (eds.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newberry House, 1979. Pp. 202-214.

Groff, P. Speaking and spelling. *Language Arts*, 1979, *56*, 26-33.

Hanna, P. R., Hodges, R. E., & Hanna, J. *Spelling: Structure and strategies*. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 1971.

Schane, S. Linguistics, spelling, and pronunciation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 1970, *4*, 137-141.

APPENDIX B

SPELLING RULES

AND

SPELLING CROSSWORD PUZZLES

Consonant Spellings

1. Initial consonant clusters
2. Final consonant clusters
3. /f/ spelled *ff*; /l/ spelled *ll*; /s/ spelled *ss*
4. /k/ spelled *c*, *k*, *ck*
5. /f/, /k/, /l/, /s/ after long vowels
6. /ch/ spelled *ch*, *tch*

Vowel Spellings

1. /ā/ spelled *a...e*, *ai*, *ay*
2. /ē/ spelled *ea*, *ee*
3. /ī/ spelled *i...e*, *y*
4. /ī/ spelled *i...e*, *y*, *igh*, *i*
5. /ō/ spelled *o...e*, *oa*
6. /ō/ spelled *o...e*, *oa*, *ow*, *o*
7. /ū/ spelled *u...e*, *oo*
8. /ū/ spelled *u...e*, *oo*, *ew*, *ue*
9. /u̇/ spelled *u*, *oo*
10. /ou/ spelled *ou*, *ow*

Vowel-r Spellings

1. /är/ spelled *ar*
2. /ôr/ spelled *ore*, *oar*, *or*, *ar*
3. /ėr/ spelled *er*, *ir*, *ur*, *or*
4. /ir/ spelled *ear*, *eer*

Prepared by

SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

Complete the puzzle. All the words begin with consonant clusters.

ACROSS →

2. not go; a _____ sign

3. not hilly

5. a kind of smile

7. to hit on the face

9. happy, pleased

10. to move in water

DOWN ↓

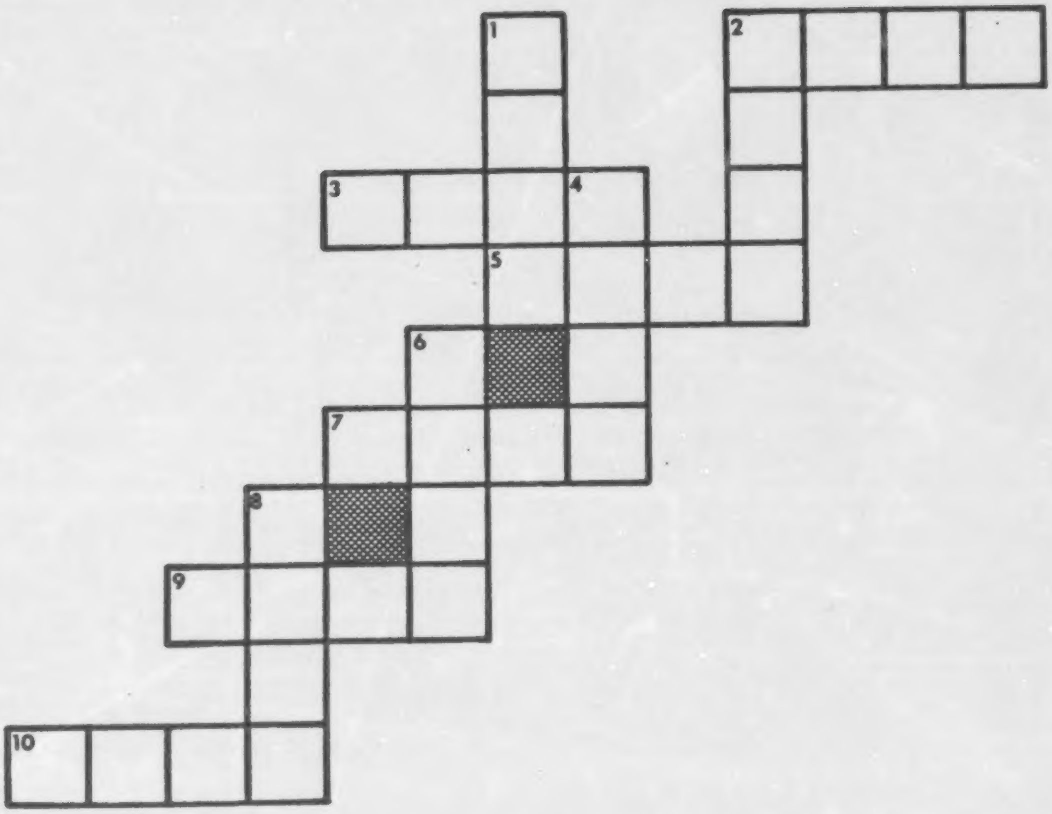
1. to pull along the ground

2. to turn around in circles, like a top

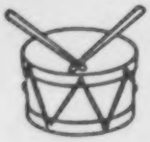
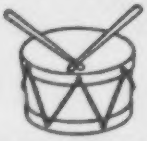
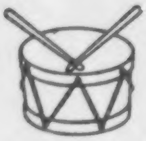
4. to catch an animal

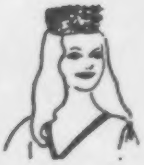
6. something for riding on the snow

8. not fat

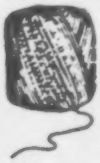


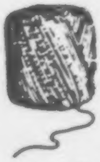
Consonant Spellings: 1. Initial consonant clusters

The word  begins with two consonant sounds. Two consonant sounds together are spelled the same way as they are spelled alone. The first two sounds in  are spelled with *d* and *r*. When a word begins with more than one consonant sound, it begins with a consonant cluster. The consonant cluster in  is spelled with *dr*.

The word  begins with a consonant cluster. The consonant cluster is spelled with *qu*.

Here are some other words that begin with a consonant cluster: *plan, snap, step, drip, quit, quip, skin, slid, slip, trim, trip.*

Sometimes a consonant cluster has three sounds. The word  begins with a consonant cluster that has three sounds.

The word  begins with *str*. Here are some other words that begin with a consonant cluster that has three sounds: *strip, strap, strum, splat.*

Complete the puzzle. All the words end with consonant clusters.

ACROSS →

3. Go _____, not right.

6. to put seeds in the ground

8. a light

9. did sleep

10. somewhat wet

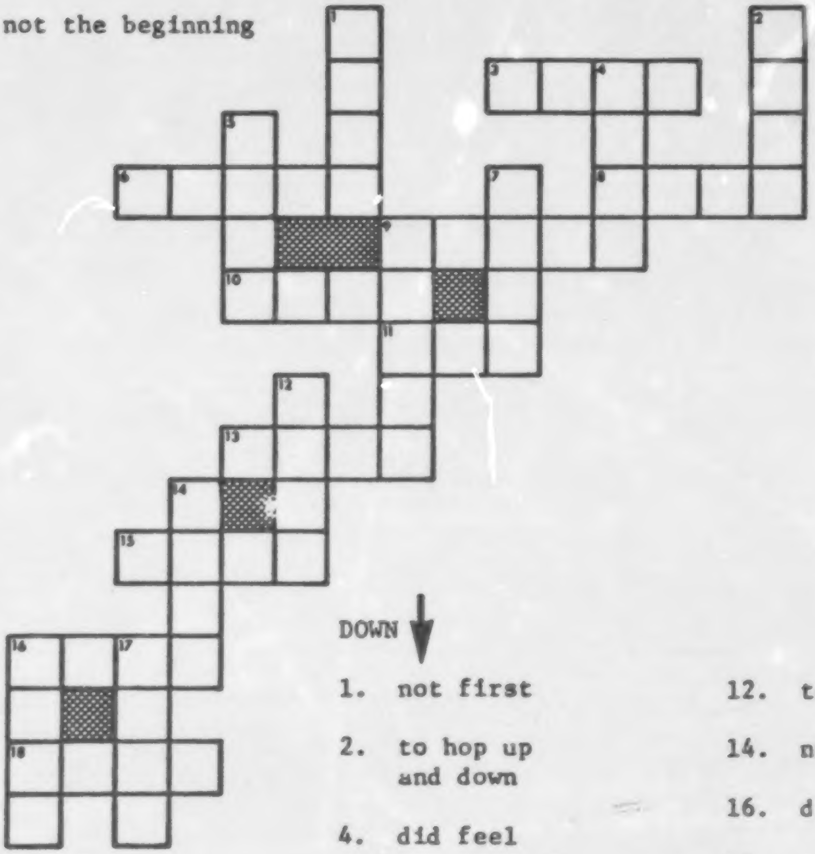
11. not the beginning

13. to look for animals

15. did go

16. not hard

18. what a bird lays eggs in



DOWN ↓

1. not first

2. to hop up and down

4. did feel

5. It is at the end of your arm.

7. did hold

9. did spend

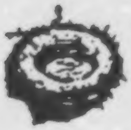
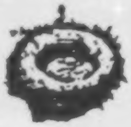
12. to have to

14. not east

16. did send

17. not slow

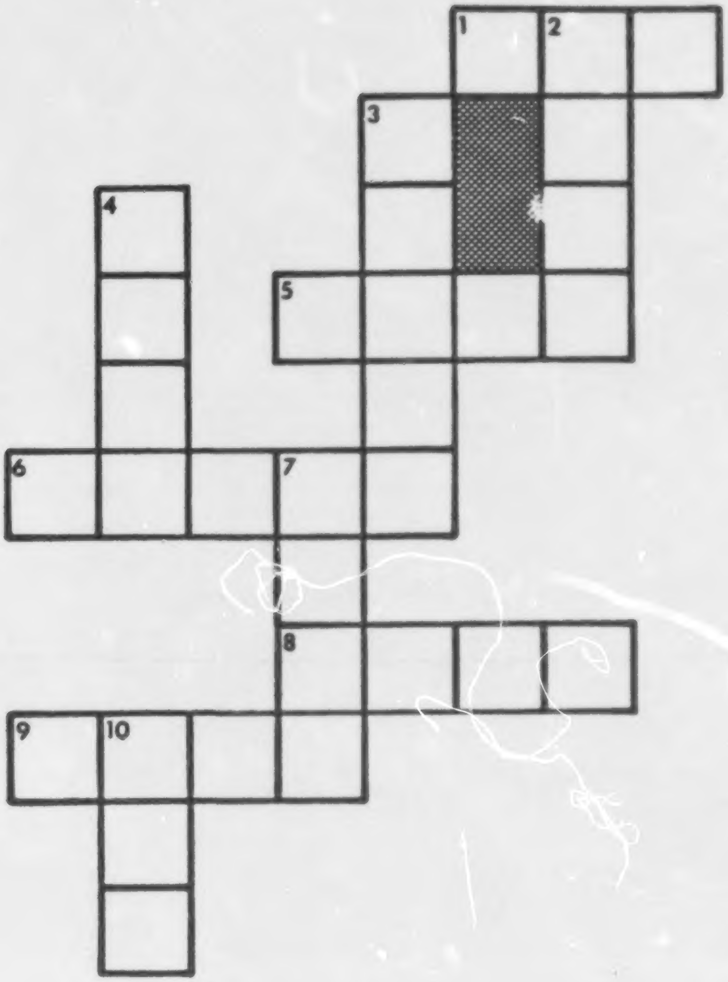
Consonant Spellings: 2. Final consonant clusters

The word  ends with two consonant sounds. It ends with a consonant cluster. The consonant sounds in a consonant cluster at the end of a word are spelled the same way that they are spelled alone. The consonant cluster in  is spelled with *st*.

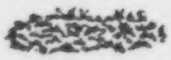
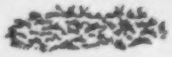
Here are some other words that end with a consonant cluster: *band*, *grand*, *sand*, *stamp*, *stand*, *vast*, *belt*, *next*, *test*, *left*.

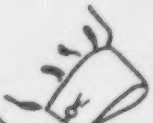
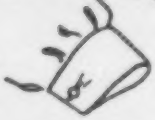
Complete the puzzle. All the words end with doubled consonants.

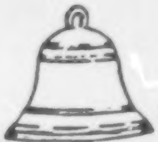
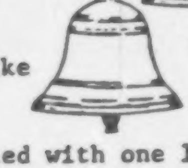
ACROSS →	DOWN ↓
1. not on	2. did fall
5. to shout	3. to put clothes on
6. what windows are made of	4. a deep hole for water; not sick
8. not more	7. not buy
9. a small mountain	10. sick



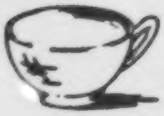
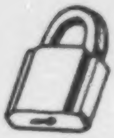
Consonant Spellings: 3. /f/ spelled *ff*; /l/ spelled *ll*; /s/ spelled *ss*

The vowel sound in  is spelled with *a*. When the last sound in words like  comes at the end of the word after a vowel sound spelled with one letter, the last sound is spelled with *ss*. The letters *ss* are a doubled consonant. A doubled consonant is two of the same letters that spell one sound. Here are some other words that have a vowel sound spelled with one letter and end with the doubled consonant *ss*: *class, pass, bless, mess, press, miss, toss.*

The vowel sound in  is spelled with *u*. When the last sound in words like  comes at the end of the word after a vowel sound spelled with one letter, the last sound is spelled with *ff*. The letters *ff* are a doubled consonant. Here are some other words that have a vowel sound spelled with one letter and end with the doubled consonant *ff*: *stiff, puff, stuff.*

The vowel sound in  is spelled with *e*. When the last sound in words like  comes at the end of the word after a vowel sound spelled with one letter, the last sound is spelled with *ll*. The letters *ll* are a doubled consonant. Here are some other words that have a vowel sound spelled with one letter and end with the doubled consonant *ll*: *spell, swell, drill, fill, pill, still.*

Complete the puzzle.

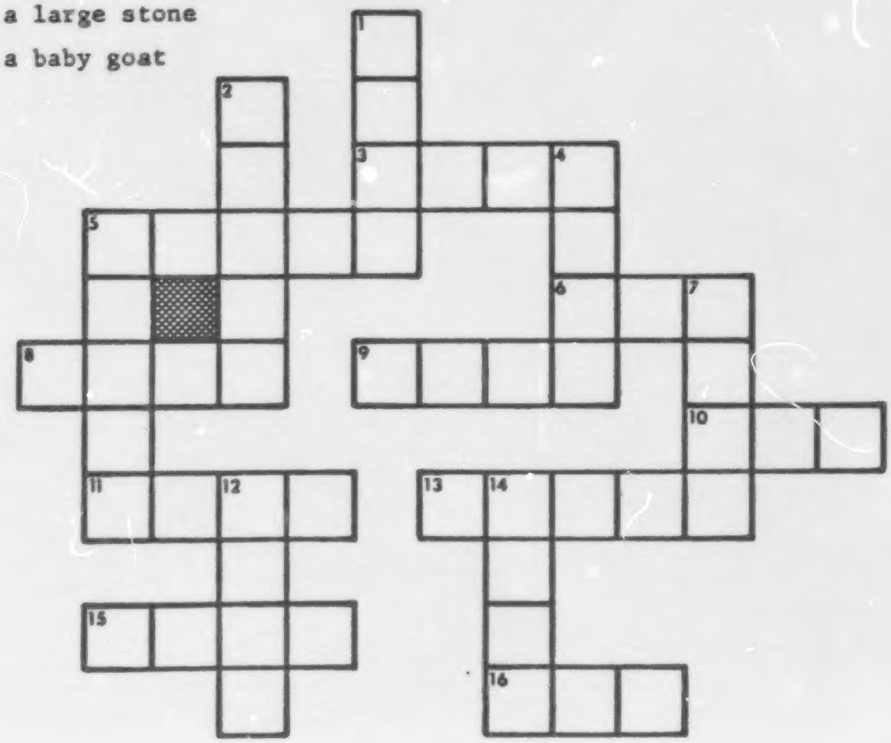
All the words begin with the same sound as  or end with the same sound as  .

ACROSS →

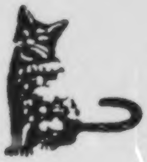
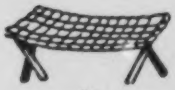
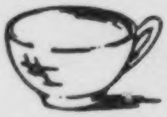
3. how much something is
5. what a duck says
6. a baby bear
8. ill
9. a bird that swims
10. a hat
11. did keep
13. a little bit to eat
15. a large stone
16. a baby goat

DOWN ↓

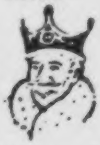
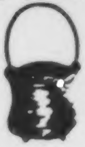
1. You wear it on your foot, under your shoe.
2. a dark color
4. like a small nail
5. fast
7. not front
12. to choose
14. between your body and your head



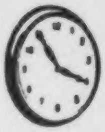
Consonant Spellings: 4. /k/ spelled *c*, *k*, *ck*

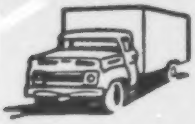
The first sound in  is spelled with *c*. This sound is spelled with *c* before *a*, *o*, and *u*. The vowel sound in *cat* is spelled with *a*.  has the same first sound as *cat*. The vowel sound is spelled with *o*, so the first sound in *cot* is spelled with *c*.  has the same first sound as *cat* and *cot*. The vowel sound is spelled with *u*, so the first sound is spelled with *c*.

Here are some other words that have the *c* spelling before *a*, *o*, and *u*: *can, camp, cast, cob, cut.*

 has the same first sound as *cat*. The first sound in *king* is spelled with *k*. This sound is spelled with *k* before *i* and *e*. The vowel sound in *king* is spelled with *i*.  has the same first sound as *king*. The vowel sound is spelled with *e*, so the first sound is spelled with *k*.

Here are some other words that have the *k* spelling before *i* and *e*: *kiss, kilt, king, keg*.

The last sound in words like  is spelled with *ck*. The letters *ck* are a two-letter consonant. A two-letter consonant has two different letters that spell one sound. The two-letter consonant *ck* spells the sound at the end of the word after a vowel sound spelled with one letter. The vowel sound in *clock* is spelled with the letter *o*.

 has the same last sound as *clock*. The vowel sound is spelled with *u*, so the last sound is spelled with *ck*.

Here are some other words that have the last sound spelled with *ck* after a vowel sound spelled with one letter: *truck, dock, rack, stick, wick, slack, struck, peck.*

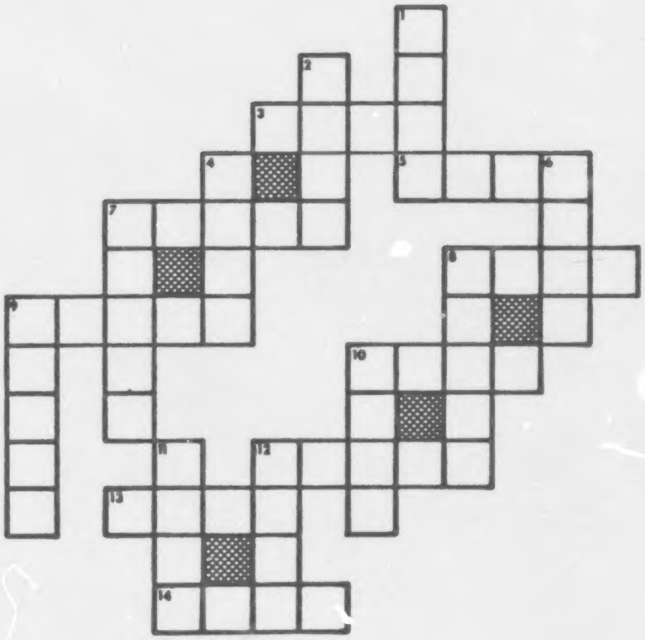
Complete the puzzle. All the words have long-vowel sounds followed by /f/, /k/, /l/, or /s/. You may use a dictionary to check the vowel spelling.

ACROSS →

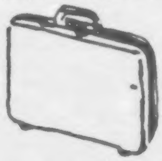
3. a funny story
5. a ______ of bread
7. to rob
8. to cook inside a stove
9. the side of your face
10. not warm
12. a huge animal in the ocean
13. a story
14. a big pond

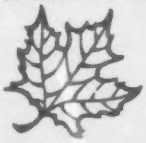
DOWN ↓

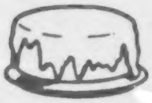
1. the back of your foot
2. something to swim in
4. not strong
6. not real
7. to talk
8. did break
9. to run after
10. It is black; you can burn it.
11. to send a letter
12. 7 days

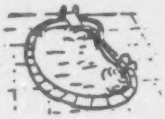


Consonant Spellings: 5. /f/, /k/, /l/, /s/ after long vowels

The word *less* ends with /s/. *Less* has a doubled consonant after a short-vowel sound spelled with one letter. The word  has a long-vowel sound. /s/ is spelled with *s* after a long-vowel sound. *Case* has the *a...e* vowel spelling and one *s*.

The word *stiff* ends with /f/. *Stiff* has a doubled consonant after a short-vowel sound spelled with one letter. The word  has a long-vowel sound. /f/ is spelled with *f* after a long-vowel sound. *Leaf* has the *ea* vowel spelling and one *f*. Here are some other words with the *f* spelling for /f/ after a long vowel: *life, beef, reef, safe, strife, wife.*

The word *lock* ends with /k/. *Lock* has a two-letter consonant after a short-vowel sound spelled with one letter. The word  has a long-vowel sound. /k/ is spelled with *k* after a long-vowel sound. *Cake* has the *a...e* vowel spelling and a single *k*. Here are some other words with the *k* spelling for /k/ after a long vowel: *smoke, wake, rake, leak, like, snake, bike, cloak, reek, sneak, bleak, hike.*

The word *sell* ends with /l/. *Sell* has a doubled consonant after a short-vowel sound spelled with one letter. The word  has a long-vowel sound. /l/ is spelled with *l* after a long-vowel sound. *Pool* has the *oo* vowel spelling and a single *l*. Here are some other words with the *l* spelling for /l/ after a long vowel: *hole, wheel, fail, mile, jail, cool, snail, scale, file, seal.*

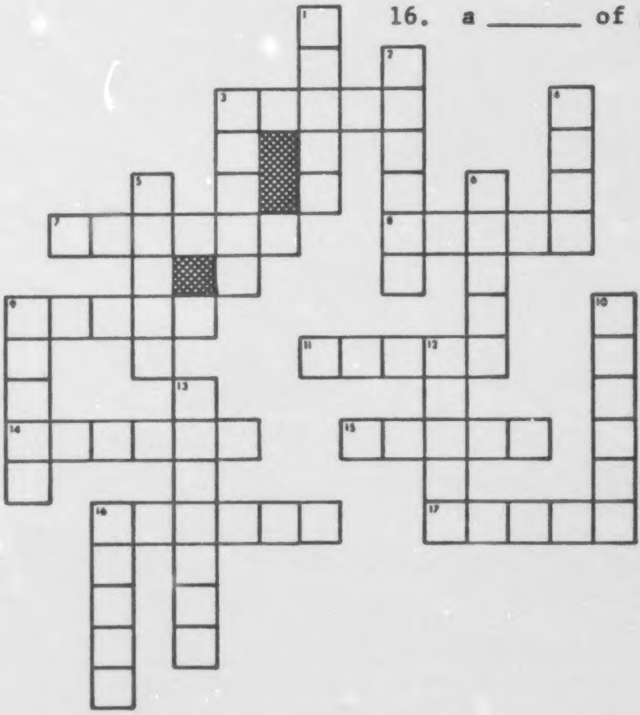
Complete the puzzle. All the words end with /ch/. You may use a dictionary to check the vowel spelling.

ACROSS →

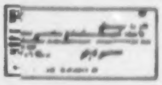
3. a place to sit in front or back of a house
7. what you make in cloth with a a needle
8. the person who tells the team how to play
9. to come out of eggs, like chickens
11. the seashore
14. It helps you walk when you have a broken leg.
15. to throw a ball
16. a part of a tree
17. a feeling about something; an idea; to have a h____ about something

DOWN ↓

1. fire on a handle; light to see at night
2. where some people go on Sunday
3. a kind of fruit
4. what makes you scratch
5. You may dress like one on trick or treat night.
6. a big farm or grassland where cows and horses live
9. to tie a horse to a post; to ______ a horse to a post
10. to draw
12. not throw
13. to scrape off skin with your fingernails
16. a ______ of grapes



Consonant Spellings: 6. /ch/ spelled *ch, tch*

The word  begins with the /ch/ sound. The /ch/ sound at the beginning of a word is spelled with *ch*. The word *teach* ends with the /ch/ sound. /ch/ is spelled with *ch* after a two-letter vowel. *Teach* has a two-letter vowel and the *ch* spelling. Here are some other words that have a two-letter vowel followed by the *ch* spelling for /ch/: *coach, each, reach, preach, bleach.*

The words *pinch* and *march* end with the /ch/ sound. They both have a consonant before /ch/. /ch/ is spelled with *ch* after another consonant. Here are some other words that have the *ch* spelling for /ch/ after another consonant: *bench, crunch, inch, lunch, starch, lurch.*

The word *match* ends with the /ch/ sound. /ch/ is spelled with *tch* after a vowel sound spelled with one letter. *Match* has a vowel sound spelled with one letter, and *match* has the *tch* spelling for /ch/. Here are some other words with a vowel sound spelled with one letter followed by the *tch* spelling for /ch/: *batch, hatch, ditch, stretch, fetch, switch, hopscotch.*

The words in the box below are irregular. They must be memorized.

much	rich	such	which

These words have /ch/ spelled *ch* after a vowel sound spelled with one letter.

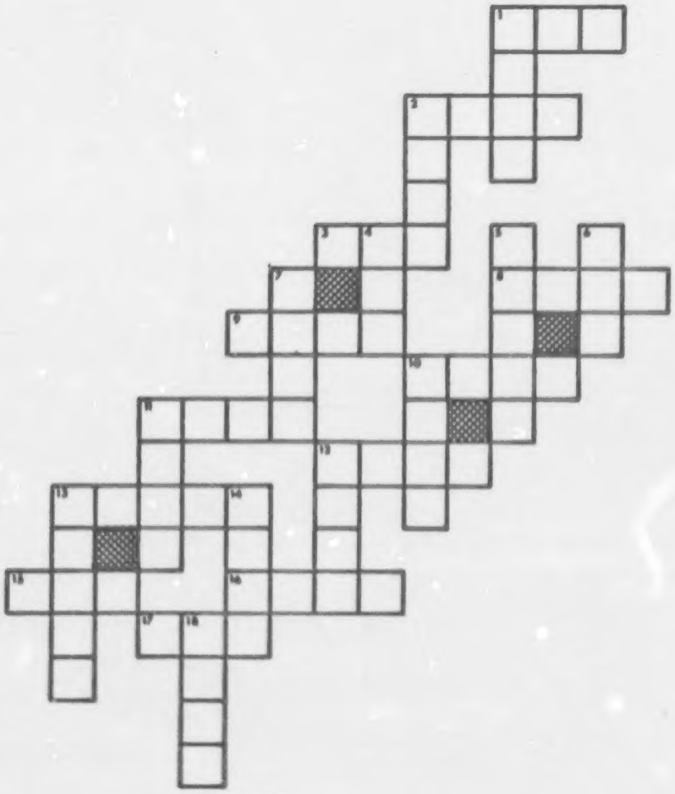
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ā/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

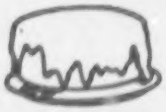
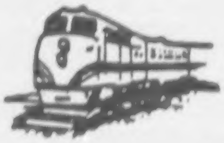
1. to give out money
2. a hurt
3. not night
8. water from the sky
9. did come
10. did give
11. not different
12. not early
13. flat land
15. to speak
16. did make
17. did eat

DOWN ↓

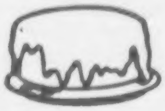
1. did pay
2. to ______ games
4. a big monkey
5. not afraid
6. to help; first ______
7. not love
10. the door for a fence
11. not go
12. did lay
13. a flat dish
14. a word like *Pat, Ted, Pam*
18. not wild

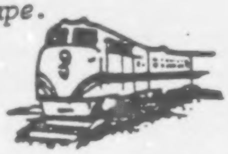


Vowel Spellings: 1. /ā/ spelled *a...e, ai, ay*

The words  and  have the /ā/ sound.

The /ā/ sound is the same as the letter name. When a vowel sound is a letter name, it is called a long vowel. When the long-vowel sound /ā/ is in the middle of a word, it is usually spelled with *a* and then *e* at the end of the word or with *ai*.

The /ā/ sound in  is spelled with *a...e*. Here are some other words that have the *a...e* spelling for /ā/: *make, brave, tame, grade, skate, cape*.

The /ā/ sound in  is spelled with *ai*. Here are some other words that have the *ai* spelling for /ā/: *rain, wait, faith, snail, claim*.

When you are not sure whether /ā/ is spelled with *a...e* or with *ai*, you must check a dictionary.

The word *play* also has the /ā/ sound. When the /ā/ sound is at the end of a word, it is usually spelled with the two-letter vowel *ay*. Here are some other words that have the *ay* spelling for /ā/ at the end: *pay, clay, way, stay, say*.

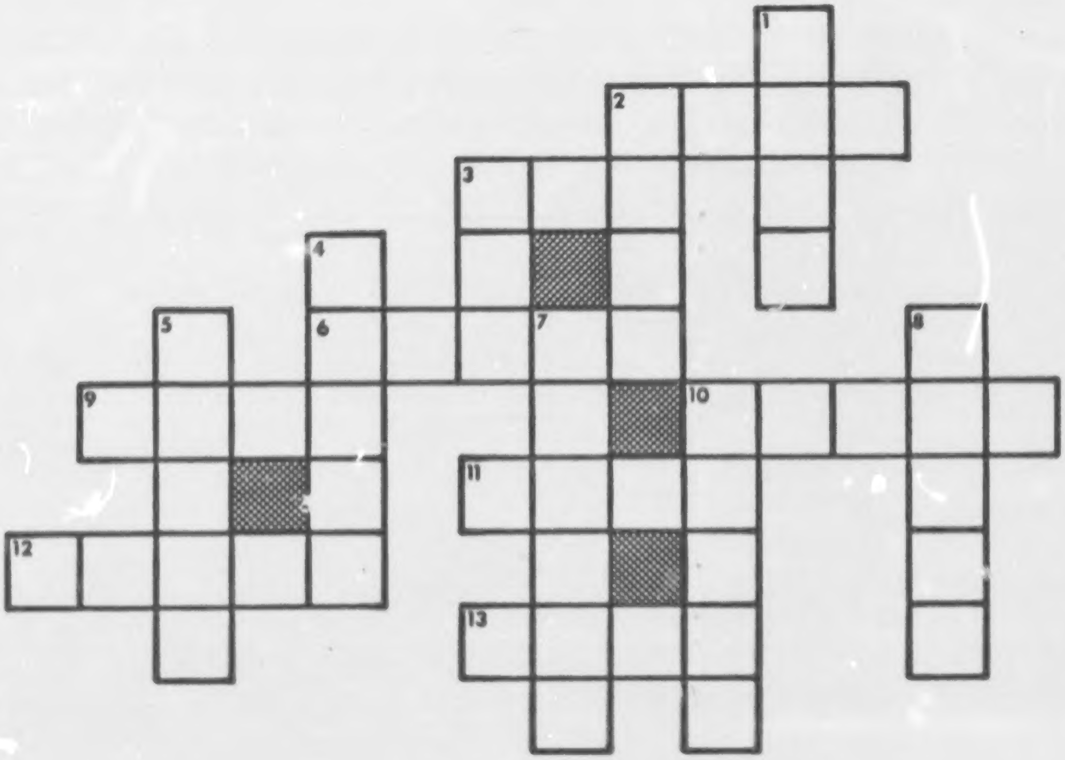
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ē/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

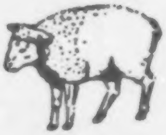
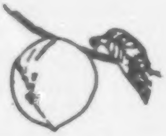
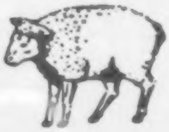
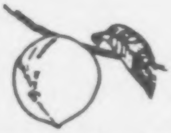
2. to give food
3. to look
6. not most
9. It has branches and a trunk.
10. the number 3
11. not costing any money
12. king and _____
13. food from animals

DOWN ↓

1. not give away
2. 24 inches = 2 _____
3. ocean
4. not dirty
5. the color of grass
7. a road in a city
8. the edge of an ocean or a lake
10. what you have in your mouth



Vowel Spellings: 2. /ē/ spelled *ea, ee*

The words  and  have the /ē/ sound. The /ē/ sound is the same as the letter name. When a vowel sound is a letter name, it is called a long vowel. The long-vowel sound /ē/ is usually spelled with the two-letter vowel *ee* or *ea*. The /ē/ sound in  is spelled with the two-letter vowel *ee*. The /ē/ sound in  is spelled with the two-letter vowel *ea*.

Here are some other words with the *ee* or *ea* spelling for /ē/: *need, weed, seed, screen, greet, bead, teach, treat, wheat.*

When you are not sure of the spelling for /ē/, you must check a dictionary.

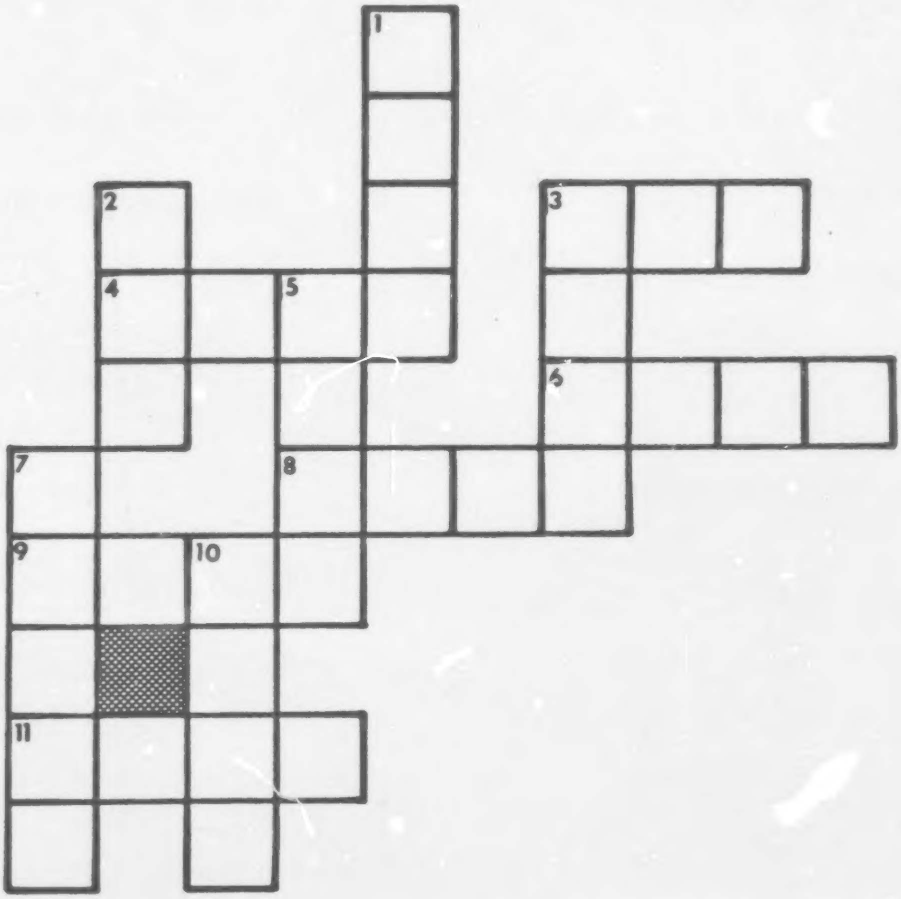
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ī/ sound.

ACROSS →

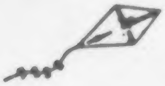
3. to move through the air
4. fruit when it is ready to eat
6. what grapes grow on
8. the number 9
9. to put something where it can't be found
11. what a clock tells

DOWN ↓

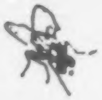
1. how big something is
2. not wet
3. the number 5
5. a kind of evergreen tree
7. the color of snow
10. 10¢



Vowel Spellings: 3. /ī/ spelled *i...e, y*

The word  has the /ī/ sound. When the /ī/ sound is in the middle of a word, it is usually spelled with the two-letter vowel *i* and then *e* at the end of the word. *Kite* has the *i...e* spelling for /ī/.

Here are some other words that have the *i...e* spelling for /ī/: *shine, drive, fire, crime, dime, slide, hive.*

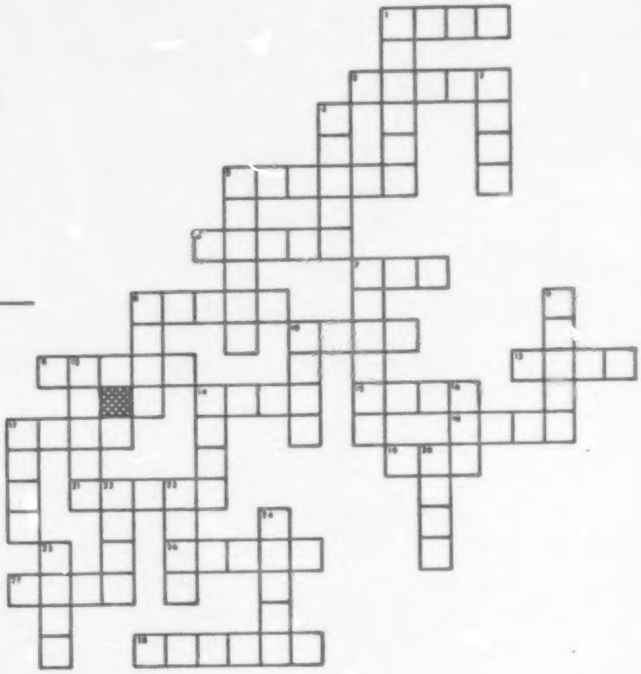
The word  ends with the /ī/ sound. /ī/ at the end of a word is usually spelled with *y*. The word *fly* has the *y* spelling for /ī/ at the end.

Here are some other words that have the /ī/ spelling for /ī/ at the end: *try, cry, pry, sky, shy, my, fry.*

Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ī/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

1. to make a tired sound when your breath goes out
2. to hit and box
5. a trip by airplane
6. not loose
7. bashful
8. may; I ______ just do that
10. to give someone a job
11. to make wheat into flour
13. what grapes grow on
14. to not lose; I can't ______ my book
15. nice; thoughtful
17. not low
18. peeling of an orange
19. clever; a ______ fox
21. a kind of string
26. not day
27. not strong; not spicy
28. shiny; a ______ star



DOWN ↓

1. very little; a ______ fever
3. what a clock tells
4. not dark
5. fear
7. to light a match
8. what you think with
9. not able to see
10. not seek
12. not wrong
14. the number 5
16. not wet
17. back leg of an animal; ______ leg
20. Draw a straight ______.
22. not tame
23. the number 9
24. upper leg of a chicken
25. a bee's home

Vowel Spellings: 4. /ī/ spelled *i...e, y, igh, i*

The /ī/ sound is in the middle of the word 9 . /ī/ in the middle of a word is usually spelled with *i* and then *e* at the end of the word. The word *nine* has the *i...e* spelling for /ī/. The word *fly* has the /ī/ sound. /ī/ at the end of a word is usually spelled with *y*.

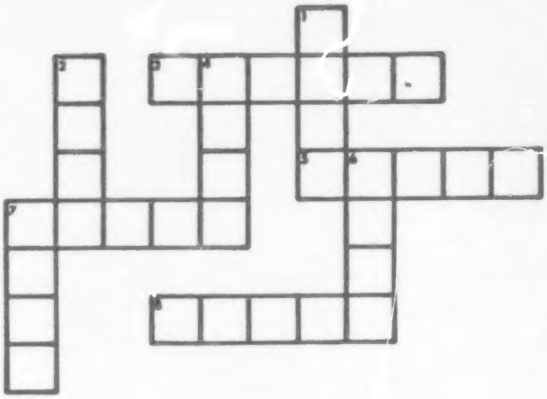
The word *high, light,* and *knight* have the /ī/ sound. /ī/ may be spelled with *igh* at the end of a word and before *t* when *t* is at the end. *High* has the /ī/ sound at the end. *Light* and *knight* have the /ī/ sound before *t*. When you are not sure of the spelling for /ī/ at the end of a word or before *t*, you must check a dictionary.

The words *child* and *bind* have the /ī/ sound. /ī/ is spelled with *i* before two consonant sounds. *Child* has the /ī/ sound before *l* and *d*. *Bind* has the /ī/ sound before *n* and *d*.

Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ō/ sound.
You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

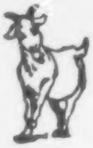
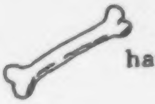
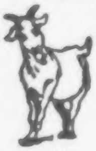
3. what a king or queen sits on
5. did drive
7. a rock
8. did freeze

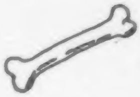


DOWN ↓

1. a street
2. a small ship
4. where you live
6. did ride
7. something for washing with

Vowel Spellings: 5. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa*

The words  and  have the /ō/ sound. The /ō/ sound is spelled with the two-letter vowel *oa* or with *o* and then *e* at the end of the word. The long-vowel sound in  is spelled with the two-letter vowel *oa*. Here are some other words with the *oa* spelling for /ō/: *load, toast, poach, roast, foam, bloat, toad, float.*

The long-vowel sound /ō/ in  is spelled with the two-letter vowel *o...e*. Here are some other words with the *o...e* spelling for /ō/: *hope, rope, stove, grove, vote, code, throne, hope.*

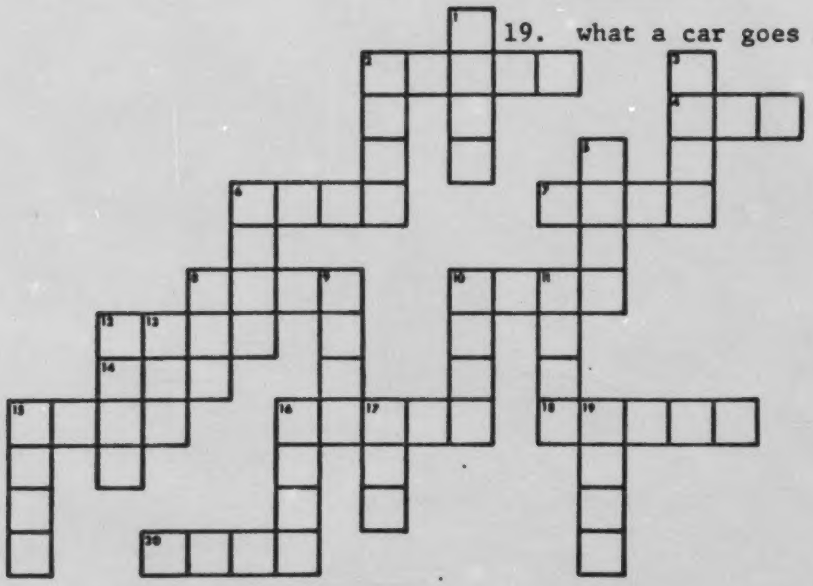
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ō/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

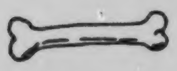
2. It goes in the air from a fire.
4. not young
6. not fast
7. brave
8. a ship
10. not hot
12. to get bigger
14. not high
15. what the wind does
16. to lie on top of water
18. male bee
20. a kind of black bird

DOWN ↓

1. a funny story
2. white flakes that drop from the sky
3. not silver
5. did sell
6. to point out; tell how to do something
8. Tie the string with a pretty ______.
9. a fee paid to drive on a road
10. a baby horse
11. to put on a truck
12. the shine of a fire
13. to move a boat with oars
15. what a dog eats
16. how rivers move
17. horses eat hay and ______s; ______meal
19. what a car goes on



Vowel Spellings: 6. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa, ow, o*

The word  has the /ō/ sound. /ō/ in the middle of a word is usually spelled with *oa* or with *o* and then *e* at the end.

The word *throw* has the /ō/ sound. /ō/ is usually spelled with *ow* at the end of a word. *Throw* has the *ow* spelling for /ō/ at the end.

Some words with the *ow* spelling have the suffix *n* added to make another word. /ō/ is usually spelled with *ow* before *n* when *n* is the suffix and the root word ends with *ow*. *Thrown* has the *n* suffix. The root word for *thrown* is *throw*.

The words *cold* and *roll* have the /ō/ sound. /ō/ is spelled with *o* before *l* and another consonant letter. *Cold* has the *o* spelling for /ō/ before *l* and *d*. *Roll* has the *o* spelling for /ō/ before *ll*. Here are some other words that have the *o* spelling for /ō/ before *l* and another consonant: *troll, scold, mold, jolt, bolt.*

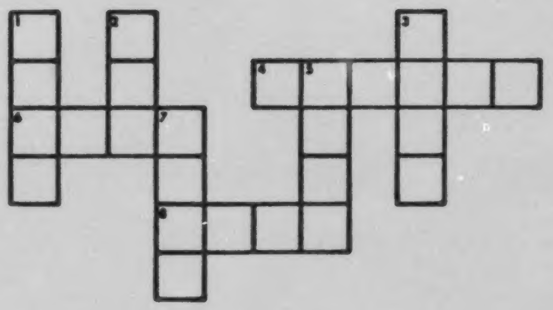
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ū/ sound.
You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

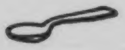
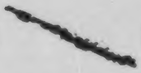
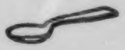
4. not rough
6. like a shoe, but higher
8. 12 o'clock

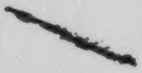
DOWN ↓

1. an ice _____
2. what a cow says
3. something to eat
5. It is in the sky at night
7. a song

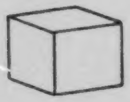
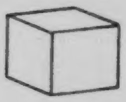


Vowel Spellings: 7. /ū/ spelled *u...e*, *oo*

The words  and  have the /ū/ sound. When the /ū/ sound is in the middle of a word, it is usually spelled with *oo* or with *u* and then *e* at the end. When the /ū/ sound is at the end of a word, it is usually spelled with *oo*. The word  has the *oo* spelling for /ū/. Here are some other words with the *oo* spelling for /ū/: *shoot, room, scoop, tooth, hoop, zoo.*

The word  has the *u...e* spelling for /ū/. Here are some other words with the *u...e* spelling for /ū/: *crude, prune, rude.*

When you are not sure if /ū/ is spelled with *oo* or with *u...e*, you must check a dictionary.

The word  has the /yū/ sound. /yū/ is usually spelled with *u* and then *e* at the end of the word. The /yū/ sound in  is spelled with the two-letter vowel *u...e*. Here are some other words with the *u...e* spelling for /yū/: *cute, mule, fume.*

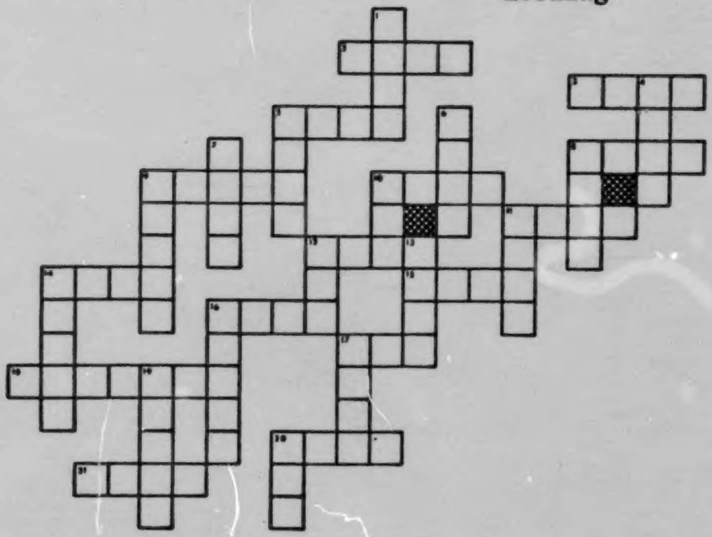
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ū/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

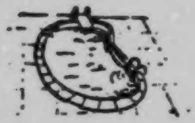
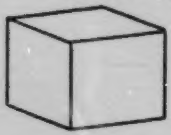
2. did draw
3. Toothpaste comes in it.
5. color of the sky
8. did grow
9. a big feather for a hat
10. It shines at night.
11. It helps to solve crimes; a hint.
12. what you eat
14. not a long time; we will ______ be there.
15. Someone with bad manners is r______.
16. food cooked with meat in a pot
17. not old
18. not a hen
20. a big hill of sand
21. did fly

DOWN ↓

1. not false
4. to make tea
5. did blow
6. where you can swim
7. a song
8. You stick things together with it.
9. a dried plum
10. what a cow says
11. what you do to gum
12. not many
13. did draw
14. not a fork or knife
16. to scatter; to st______ flowers on the ground
17. the middle of the day; 12 o'clock
19. did throw
20. wetness of the ground in the morning



Vowel Spellings: 8. /ū/ spelled *u...e*, *oo*, *ew*, *ue*

The word  has the /ū/ sound. The /ū/ sound in the middle of a word is spelled with *oo* or with *u* and then *e* at the end. The word  has the /yū/ sound. The /yū/ sound in the middle of a word is spelled with *u* and then *e* at the end.

The words *blue* and *knew* have the /ū/ sound. The words *hue* and *few* have the /yū/ sound. At the end of a word, /ū/ and /yū/ are spelled with either *ue* or *ew*. The words *hue* and *blue* have the *ue* spelling. The words *knew* and *few* have the *ew* spelling.

When you are not sure whether the spelling of /ū/ or /yū/ at the end of a word is *ue* or *ew*, you must check a dictionary.

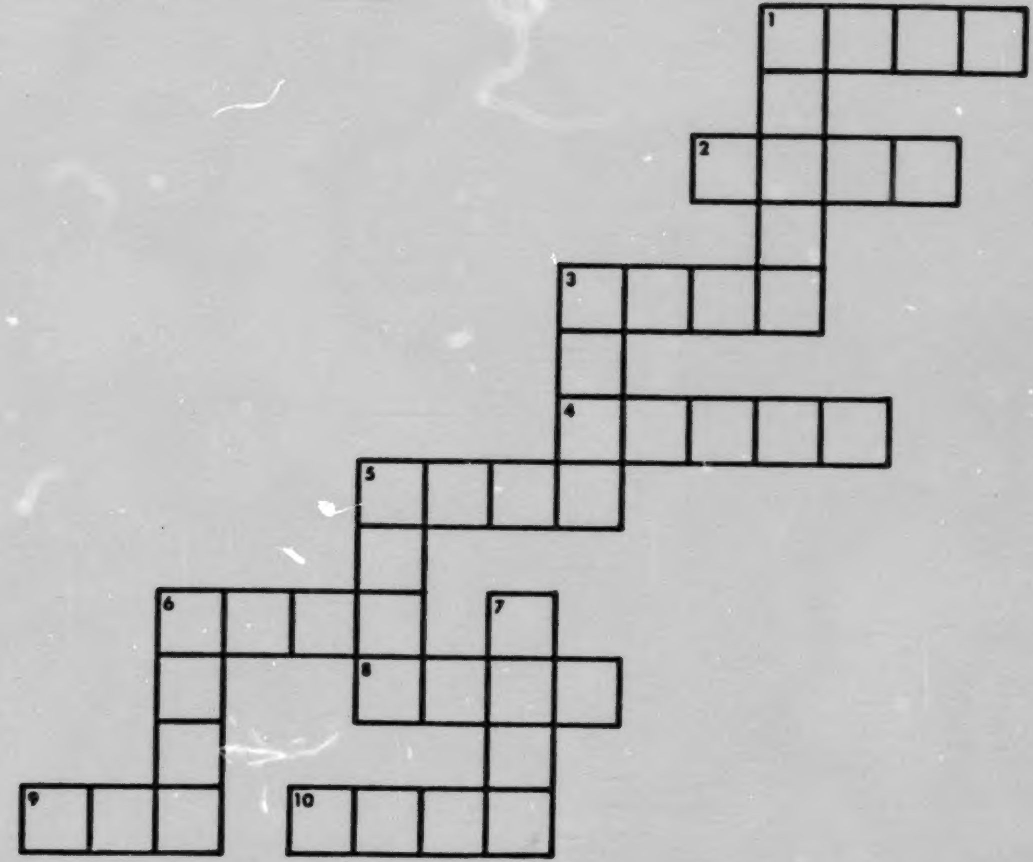
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ů/ sound.

ACROSS →

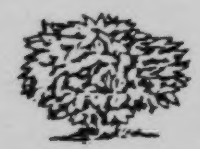
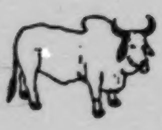
1. male cow
2. someone who fixes food
3. something to read
4. did stand
5. to press on something; p_____ the doorbell
6. not empty
8. see; l_____ through your glasses
9. lay something down; p_______ something down
10. not bad

DOWN ↓

1. a small river
3. It grows in the ground and looks like a small tree.
5. grab something and ______ it toward you
6. 12 inches
7. Trees are cut down to get w_______.



Vowel Spellings: 9. /ů/ spelled *u, oo*

The words  and  have the /ů/ sound. /ů/ is usually spelled with *u* before *sh* and *ll*. The word *bush* has the *u* spelling for /ů/ before *sh*. The word *bull* has the *u* spelling for /ů/ before *ll*.

The words *stood* and *took* have the /ů/ sound. /ů/ is usually spelled with *oo* before *d* and *k*. The word *stood* has the *oo* spelling for /ů/ before *d*. *Took* has the *oo* spelling for /ů/ before *k*.

Here are some other words that have the *oo* spelling for /ů/ before *d* and *k*: *hood, shook, crook, look*.

The words *put* and *foot* have the /ů/ sound. Both words end with *t*. /ů/ is spelled with *u* in *put*, but with *oo* in *foot*. When you are not sure if the spelling for /ů/ is *u* or *oo*, you must check a dictionary.

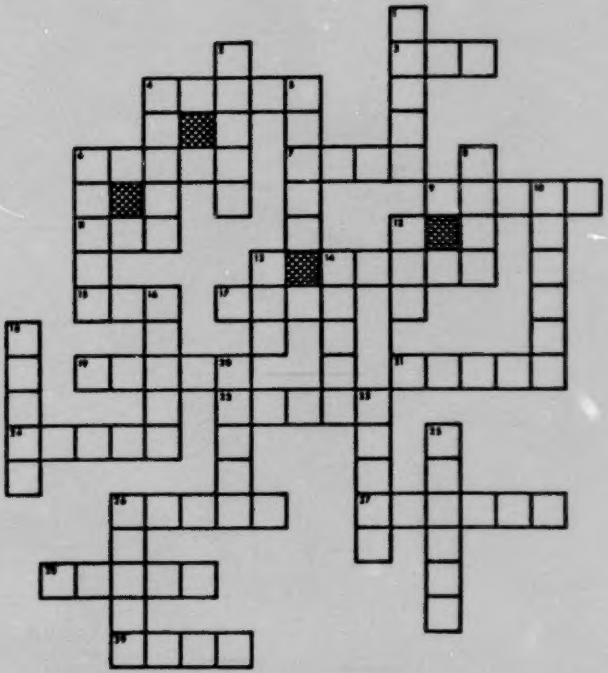
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ou/ sound.

ACROSS →

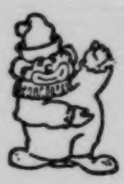
3. a kind of bird; it hunts at night
4. a Boy or a Girl ______
6. a funny person at a circus
7. what you say when something hurts you
9. a home
11. not in
14. not lost
15. not then; right ______
17. not sweet
19. a kind of dog
21. strength; lots of p______
22. the shape of a ball or a plate
24. what you hear
26. to say 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
27. one's mate; one's sp______
28. a dark color
29. not up

DOWN ↓

1. Your teeth are inside it.
2. a weight; 16 ounces
4. to yell
5. a kind of fish
6. A queen wears it on her head; so does a king.
8. not soft; a ______ sound
10. not a bath
12. belonging to us
13. Milk comes from it.
14. not a smile
16. did wind the clock
18. two mice, one ______
20. to die in the water
23. to soak with water; to put out a fire with water
25. like a shirt
26. It is white and fluffy in the sky.



Vowel Spellings: 10. /ou/ spelled *ou, ow*

The word  has the /ou/ sound. The words *how, town,* and *growl* have the /ou/ sound. /ou/ is spelled with *ow* at the end of a word. It is spelled with *ow* before *n* and before *l* when *n* or *l* is the last letter in the word. The word *how* has the *ow* spelling for /ou/ at the end. The *n* is the last letter in *town*, and *town* has the *ow* spelling for /ou/. The *l* is the last letter in *growl*, and *growl* has the *ow* spelling for /ou/.

Here are some other words that have the *ow* spelling for /ou/ at the end or before *n* or *l*: *now, plow, crown, down, howl, scowl.*

The words *loud* and *flower* have the /ou/ sound. /ou/ is spelled with *ou* in the middle of a word, but with *ow* before a vowel letter. *Loud* has the *ou* spelling for /ou/ in the middle of a word. *Flower* has the *ow* spelling of /ou/ before the vowel letter *e*.

Here are some other words that have the *ou* spelling for /ou/ in the middle of the word and the *ow* spelling for /ou/ before another vowel letter: *couch, shout, pout, spout, snout, proud, round, tower.*

```
PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEM
SORT PROCEDURE FOR SPELLING
PAGE  33

PROGRAM:   5, GRADE:  3

SKILL:  22  LONG VOWELS

   PAGE:          PAGE CONTENTS:
     47             LONG /O/ - OA* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     47             LONG /O/ - O* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     47             LONG /O/ - O...E* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     48             LONG /O/* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     48             LONG /I/* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     50             LONG /I/ - I...E* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SEGMENT
     50             LONG /A/ - A...E* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SEGMENT
     50             LONG /(Y)U/* OTHER SPELLING* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND* O...E*
                     TREATED AS IRREGULAR * LOSE, PROVE
     60             LONG /A/* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND
     60             CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND
     60             UNDERLINE* LETTER(S) FOR SPECIFIED SOUND
     60             LONG /I/ - I* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND
     65             LONG /E/* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND* (FINAL E MARKER)
     65             LONG /A/* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND* (FINAL E MARKER)
     65             UNDERLINE * WORDS WITH 2 VOWELS TOGETHER
     66             LONG /A/ - A...E* WRITE* WORD FROM PRONUNCIATION SYMBOLS* ASTE * TREATED AS IRREGULAR
     70             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* CHOOSE AND WRITE* WORD(S) WITH SPECIFIED SOUND
     70             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD FOR PICTURE
     71             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     71             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* CHOOSE AND WRITE* PRONUNCIATION SYMBOL FOR SOUND
     71             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD FOR PICTURE
     72             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     73             LONG /(Y)U/
     73             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
     78             LONG /(Y)U/ - OO* WRITE* WORD THAT COMPLETES SENTENCE
```

FIG. 1.—Sample computer listing

Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /är/ sound.

ACROSS →

3. not all; a ______ of

4. not near

6. You send one in the mail to someone who is sick or someone who has a birthday.

7. the noise a dog makes

8. It is in the sky at night.

9. part of your body; your hand is at the end of it

10. not dull

11. not light; not bright

DOWN ↓

1. not soft

2. to begin

3. a place to play softball and have a picnic

4. a place to have cows, chickens, and horses, and to grow food.

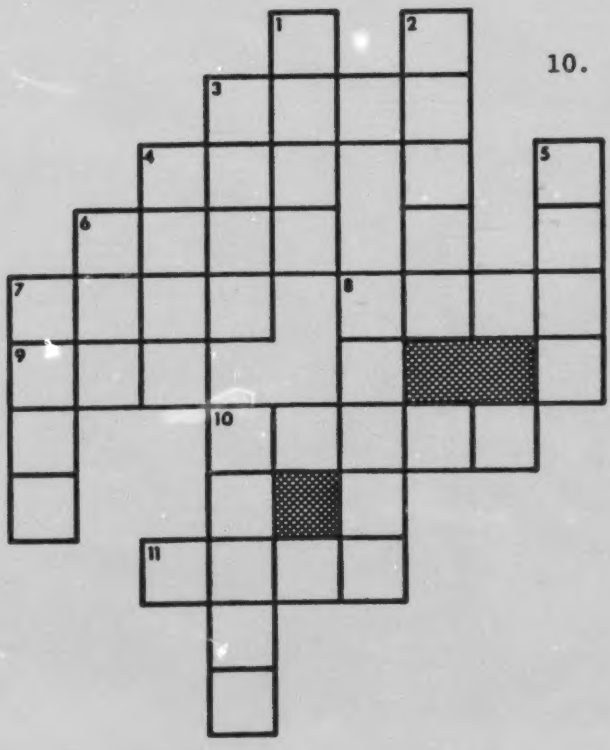
5. to hurt

6. something you ride in or drive

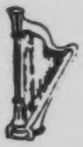
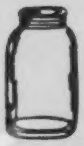
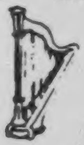
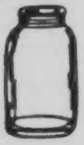
7. a building to keep horses and cows in

8. It swims in the ocean and has a big fin on its back.

10. a cloth you can wear around your neck



Vowel-r Spellings: 1. /är/ spelled *ar*

The words  and  have a vowel sound followed by /r/. A vowel sound followed by /r/ is called a vowel-r sound. The spelling for a vowel-r sound is called a vowel-r spelling.  and  have the /är/ sound. The vowel-r sound /är/ is spelled with *ar*.

Here are some other words that have the *ar* spelling for /är/: *cart, yarn, dart, start, starve, mark, smart, march, yard, hard.*

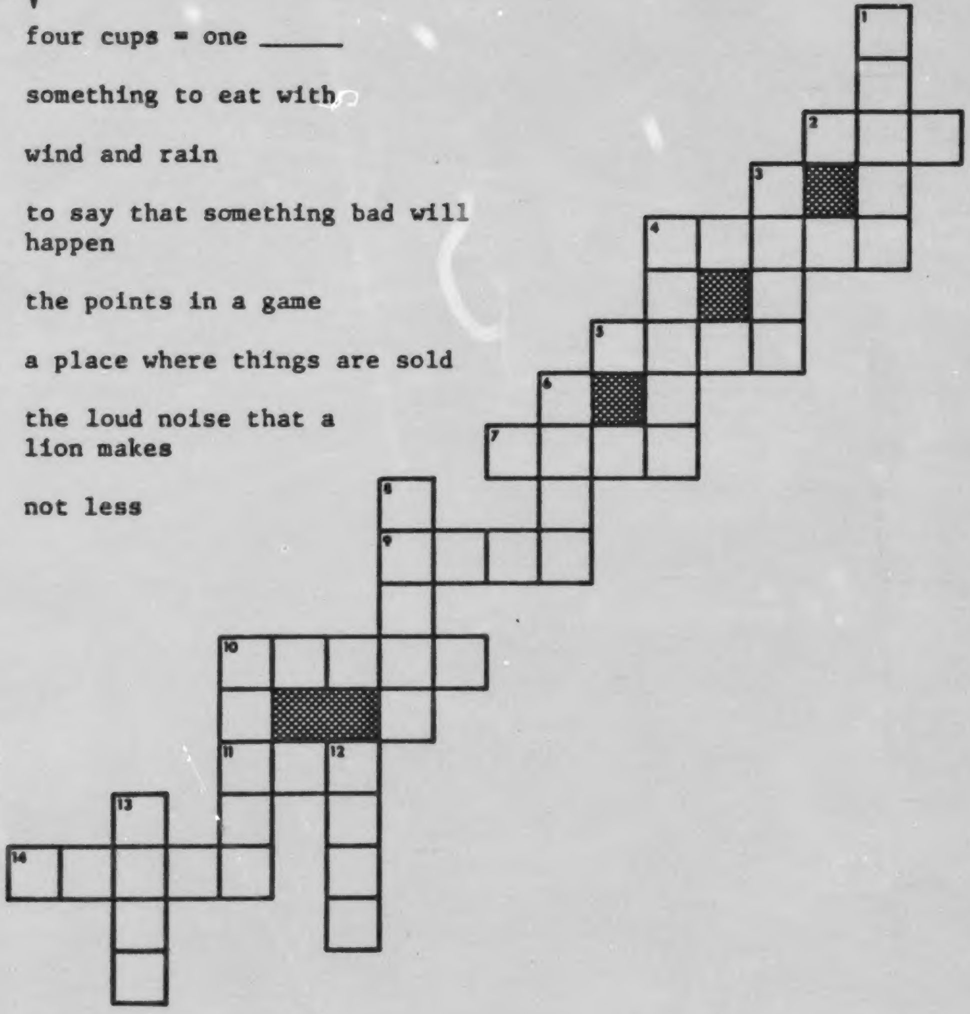
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ôr/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

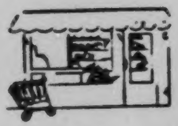
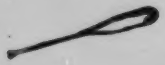
2. a big fight between countries
4. not long; not tall
5. pig's meat
7. between hot and cold
9. ______ on the cob
10. to make loud sounds when you sleep
11. what you use to row a boat
14. the edge of a lake or an ocean

DOWN ↓

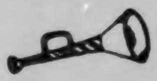
1. four cups = one ______
3. something to eat with
4. wind and rain
6. to say that something bad will happen
8. the points in a game
10. a place where things are sold
12. the loud noise that a lion makes
13. not less

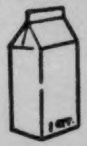


Vowel-r Spellings: 2. /ôr/ spelled *ore, oar, or, ar*

The words  and  have a vowel-r sound. They have the /ôr/ sound. /ôr/ is spelled with *ore* or *oar* at the end of a word. *Store* has the *ore* spelling for /ôr/. *Oar* has the *oar* spelling for /ôr/. Here are some other words with the *ore* or *oar* spelling for /ôr/ at the end of a word: *tore, core, gore, lore, sore, soar, bore, boar.*

If you are not sure if the spelling for /ôr/ is *ore* or *oar*, you must check a dictionary.

The word  has the /ôr/ sound. /ôr/ is spelled with *or* before a consonant. *Horn* has the *or* spelling for /ôr/ before *n*. Here are some other words with the *or* spelling for /ôr/ before a consonant: *short, torn, sort, north, sport, torch, form, cord, stork.*

The word  has the /ôr/ sound. /ôr/ is spelled with *ar* after the /w/ sound. The word *quart* has the /kw/ consonant cluster and the *ar* spelling for /ôr/ after the /w/ sound. Here are some other words that have the *ar* spelling for /ôr/ after the /w/ sound: *wart, swarm, dwarf, warp.*

The words in the box below are irregular words. They must be memorized.

for nor or

These words have the *or* spelling for /ôr/ at the end of a word.

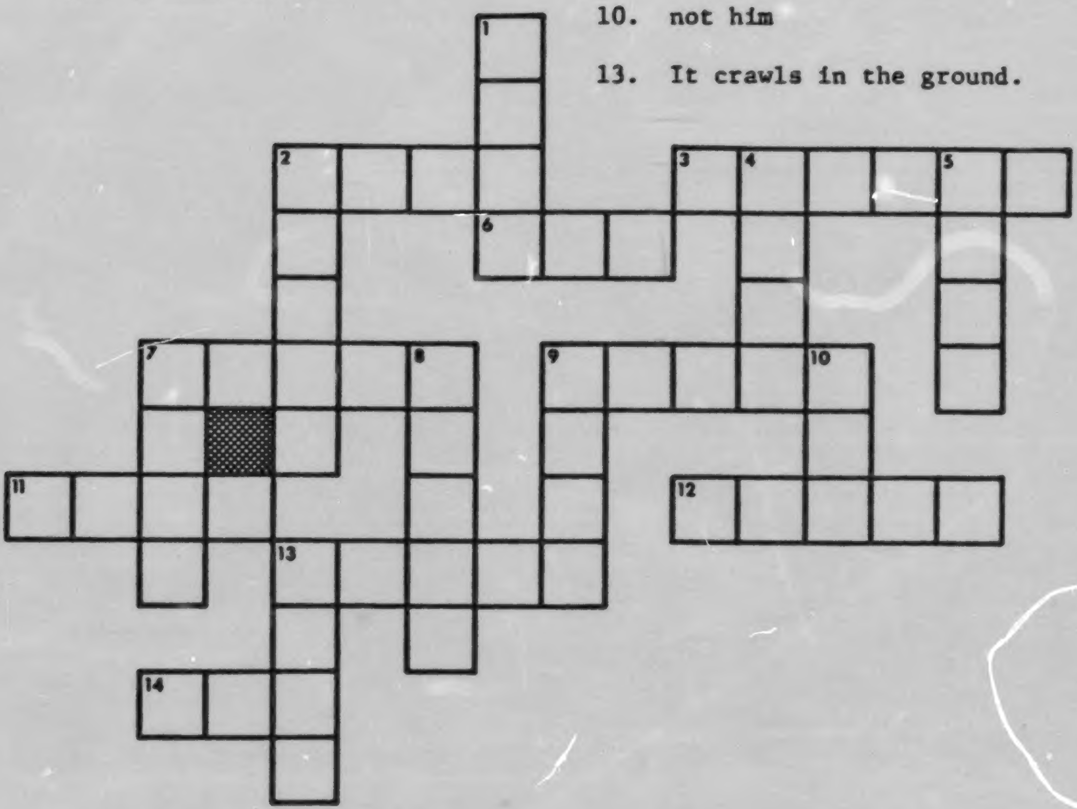
Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ėr/ sound. You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS →

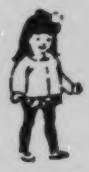
2. to mix with a spoon
3. a place to pray
6. animal hair
7. before second
9. when someone is born
11. not a boy
12. most bad
13. the earth
14. a kind of tree

DOWN ↓

1. ocean waves near the shore
2. a kind of clothes worn above the waist
4. to harm
5. a little ring of hair
7. a plant with leaves that look like feathers
8. after second
9. an animal that flies and builds nests
10. not him
13. It crawls in the ground.



Vowel-r Spellings: 3. /ėr/ spelled *er, ir, ur, or*

The word  has the /ėr/ sound. These words also have the /ėr/ sound: *chirp, turn, clerk.* The /ėr/ sound is spelled with *ir, ur,* or *er. Chirp* has the *ir* spelling for /ėr/. *Turn* has the *ur* spelling, and *clerk* has the *er* spelling for /ėr/.

Here are some other words that have the /ėr/ sound spelled with *ir, ur,* and *er: firm, shirt, dirt, thirst, burn, curb, spur, serve, term, nerve.* When you are not sure if /ėr/ is spelled with *ir, ur,* or *er,* you must check a dictionary.

These words have the /ėr/ sound: *word, worth, work.* /ėr/ is spelled with *or* after the letter *w. Word, worth,* and *work* have the /ėr/ sound spelled with *or* after *w.*

Complete the puzzle. All the words have the /ir/ sound.
You may use a dictionary.

ACROSS ⟶

2. 365 or 366 days

4. to listen

6. what you hear with

8. not far

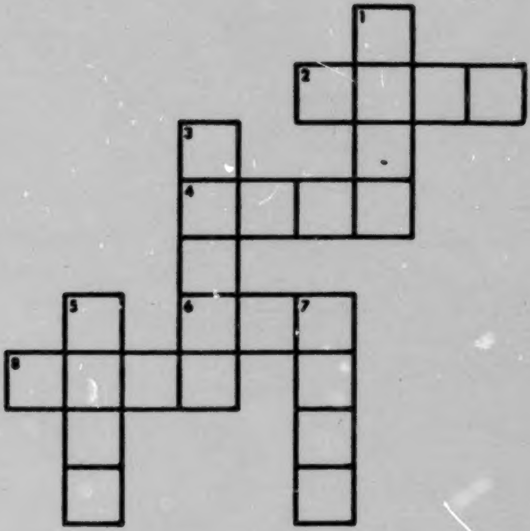
DOWN ↓

1. the water from your eye when you cry

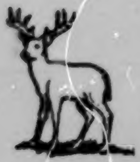
3. to shout when you like something

5. to be afraid of

7. the back of something



Vowel-r Spellings: 4. /ɪr/ spelled *ear, eer*

The word  has a vowel-r sound. It has the /ɪr/ sound.

/ɪr/ is usually spelled with *eer* or *ear*. The word *deer* has the *eer* spelling for /ɪr/. The word *fear* has the *ear* spelling for /ɪr/. Here are some other words that have the *ear* or *eer* spelling for /ɪr/: *queer, steer, clear, smear, dear.*

When you are not sure if the /ɪr/ sound is spelled with *ear* or *eer*, you must check a dictionary.

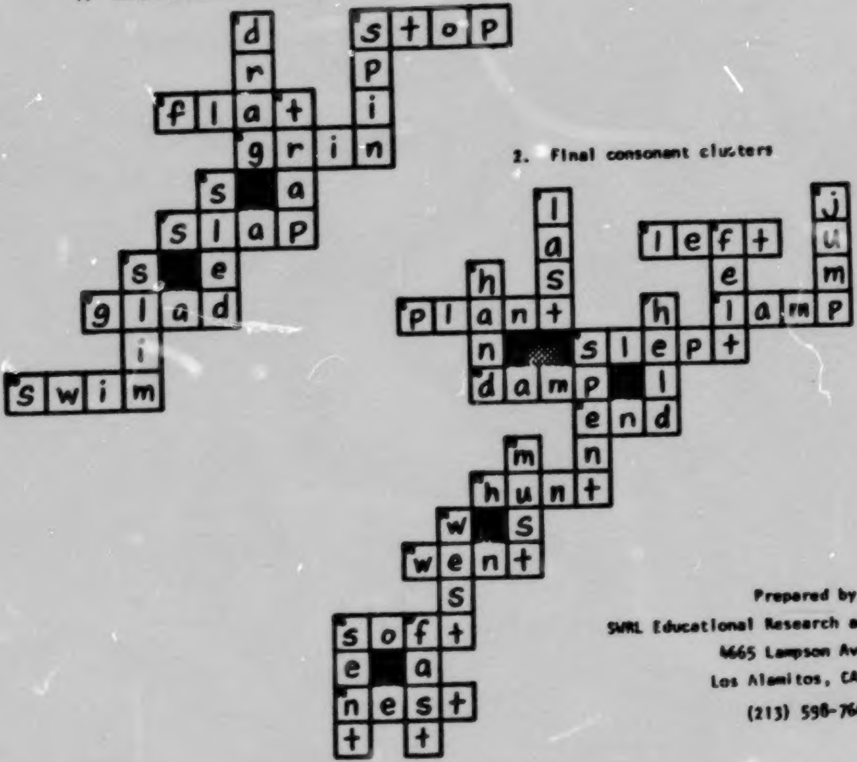
SPELLING CROSSWORD PUZZLES

ANSWER KEY

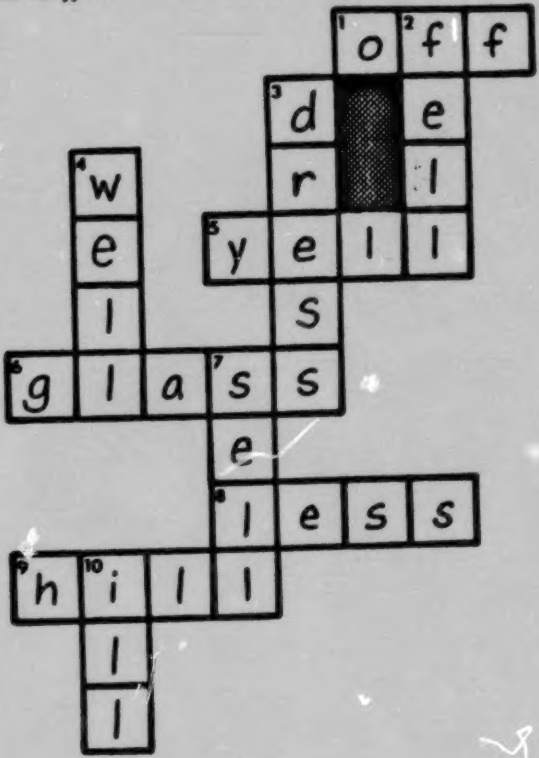
Consonant Spellings

1. Initial consonant clusters

2. Final consonant clusters

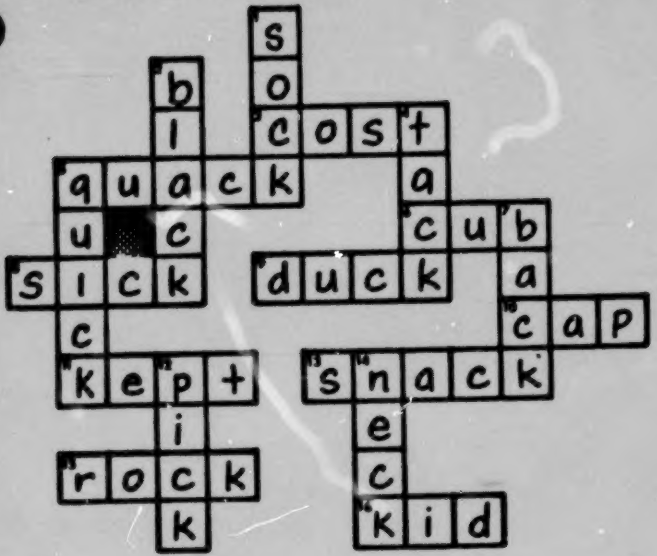

drag
spin
stop
flat
grin
trap
slap
sled
glad
slim
swim
last
left
jump
hand
plant
lamp
slept
felt
damp
held
end
spent
must
hunt
went
west
soft
sent
nest
fast

3. /f/ spelled as *ff*; /l/ spelled as *ll*; /s/ spelled as *ss*

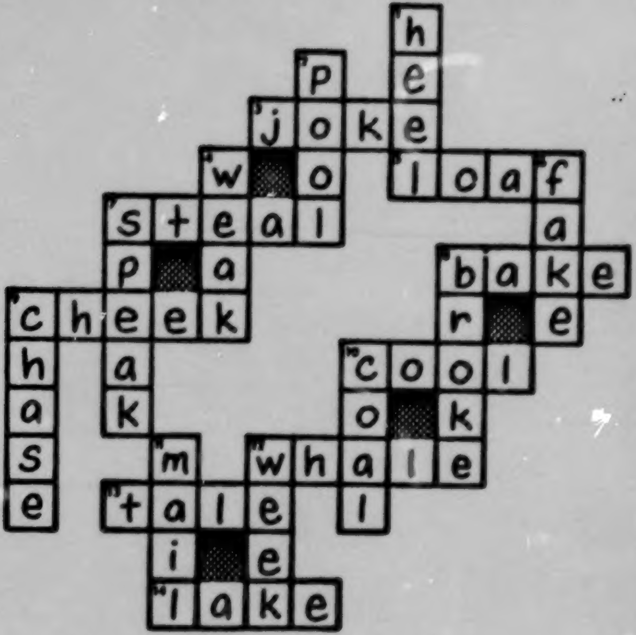

1 off
2 fell
3 dress
4 well
5 yell
6 glass
7 sell
8 less
9 hill
10 ill

Prepared by
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

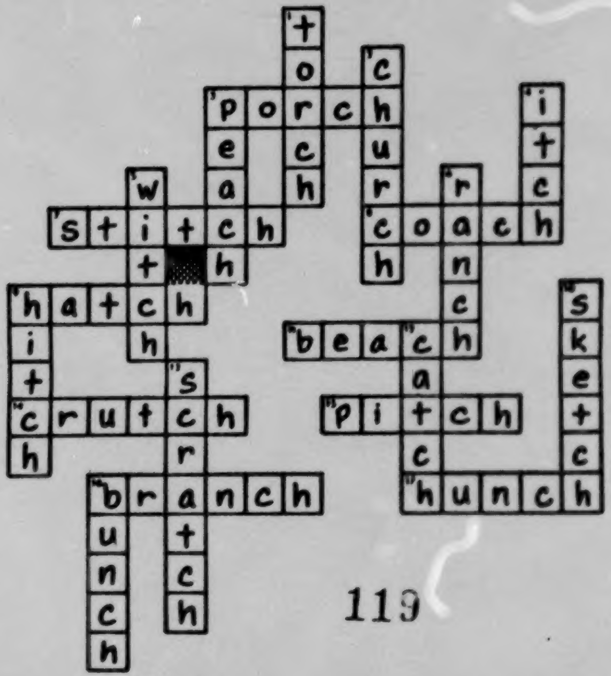
4. /k/ spelled c, k, ck


sock
black
cost
quack
tack
cub
back
duck
quick
sick
cap
kept
snack
pick
rock
neck
kid

5. /f/, /k/, /l/, /s/ after long vowels

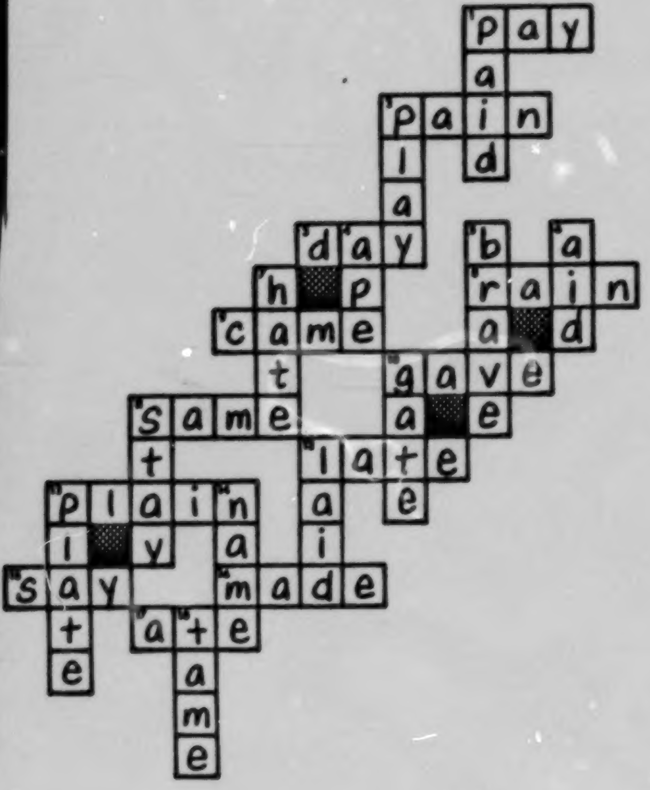

joke
pool
loaf
fake
steal
speak
weak
cheek
chase
bake
broke
cool
coal
whale
tale
mail
lake

6. /ch/ spelled ch, tch

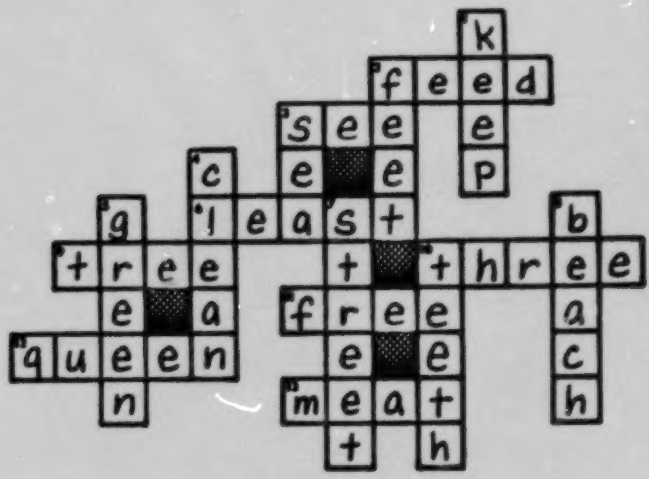

torch
church
porch
peach
itch
witch
stitch
coach
ranch
hatch
hitch
beach
catch
sketch
crutch
scratch
pitch
branch
bunch
hunch

Vowel Spellings

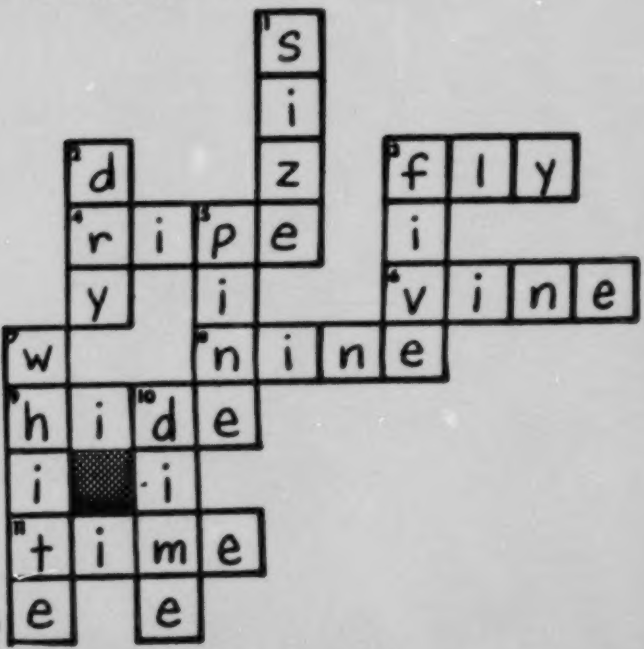
1. /ā/ spelled *a...e, ai, ay*


pay
pain
day
rain
came
gave
same
late
plain
say
made
ate

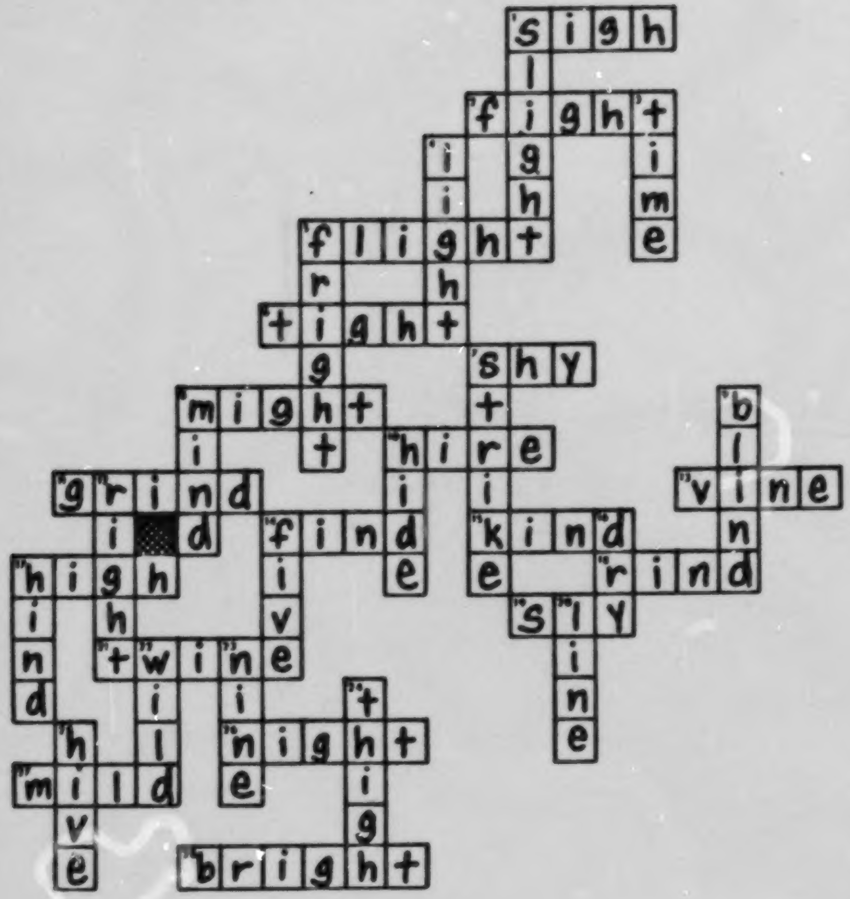
2. /ē/ spelled *ea, ee*


k
feed
see
least
tree
three
free
queen
meat

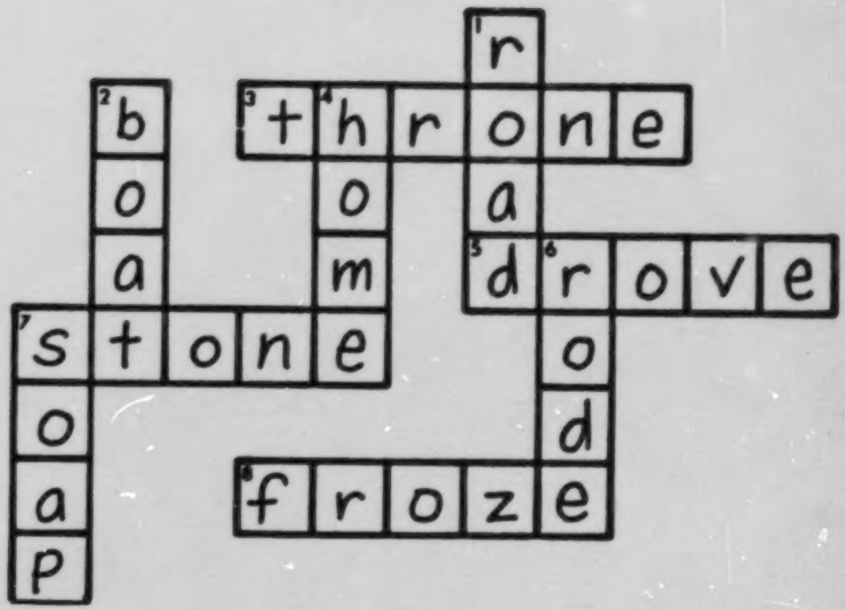
3. /ī/ spelled *i...e, y*


s
fly
ripe
vine
nine
hide
time

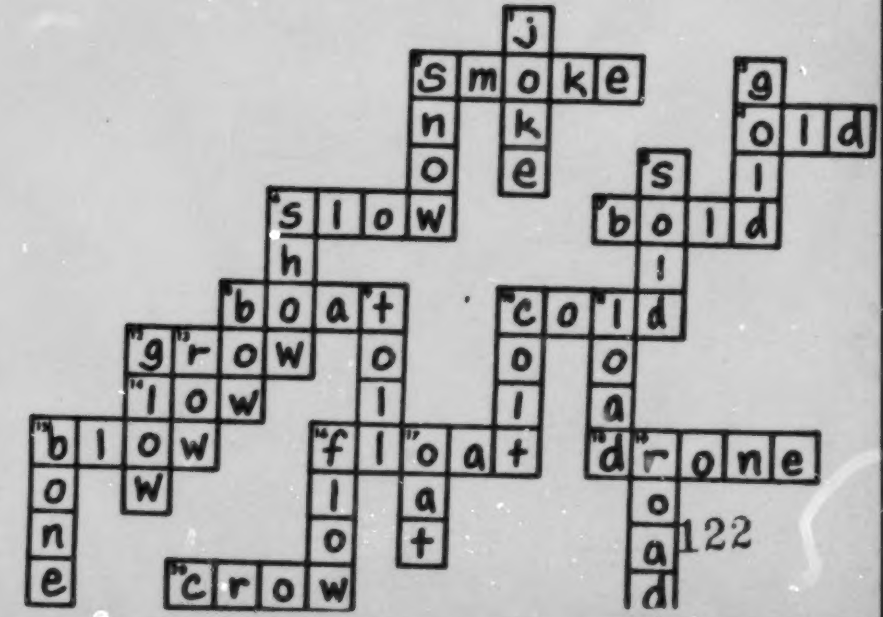
4. /ī/ spelled *i... e, y, igh, i*


sigh
slight
fight
time
fright
flight
tight
shy
might
hire
style
grind
mind
right
vine
blind
find
five
hide
kind
high
hind
rind
sly
line
twine
wild
nine
night
thigh
mild
hive
bright

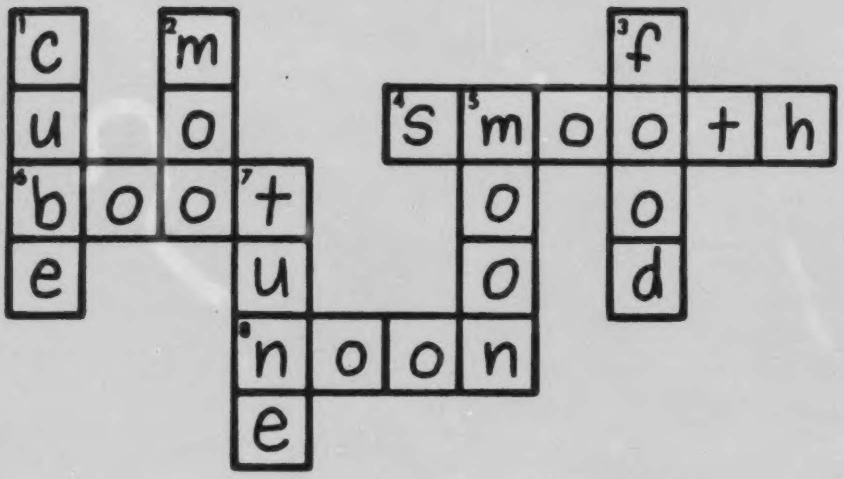
5. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa*


road
boat
throne
home
drove
rode
stone
soap
froze

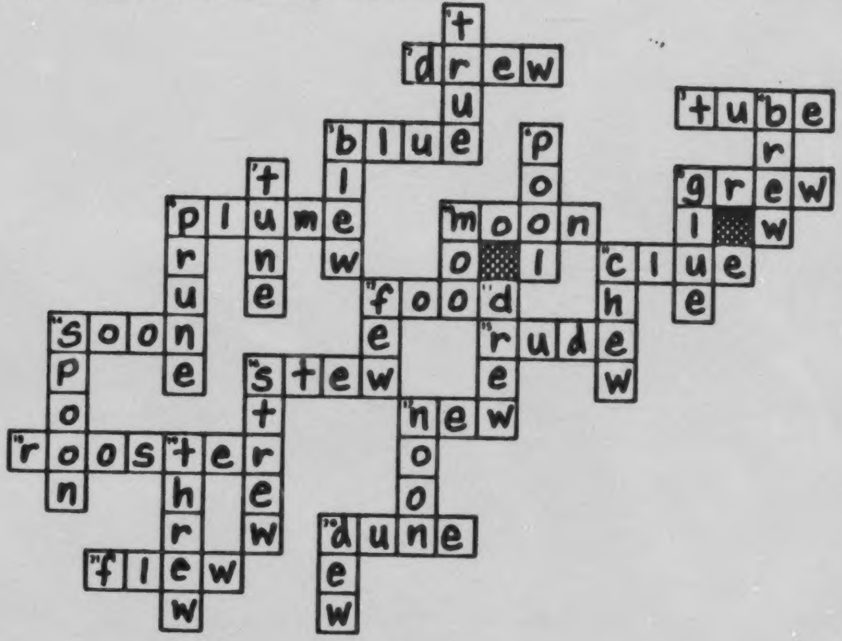
6. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa, ow, o*


joke
smoke
gold
snow
old
sold
slow
bold
show
boat
toll
cold
grow
load
low
blow
bone
float
oat
drone
road
flow
crow

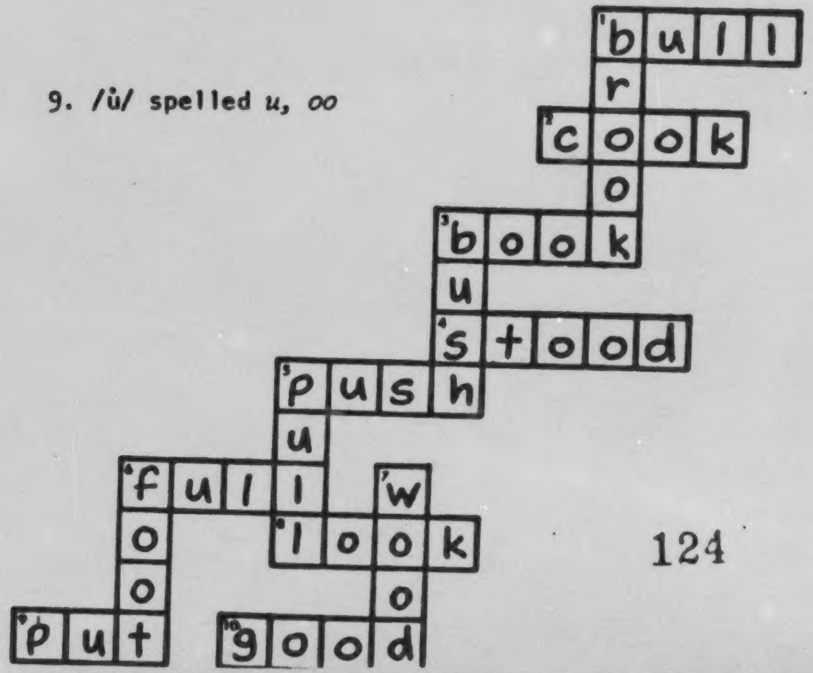
7. /ū/ spelled *u...e, oo*


1 cube
2 moo
3 food
4 smooth
5 mood
6 boot
7 tune
8 noon

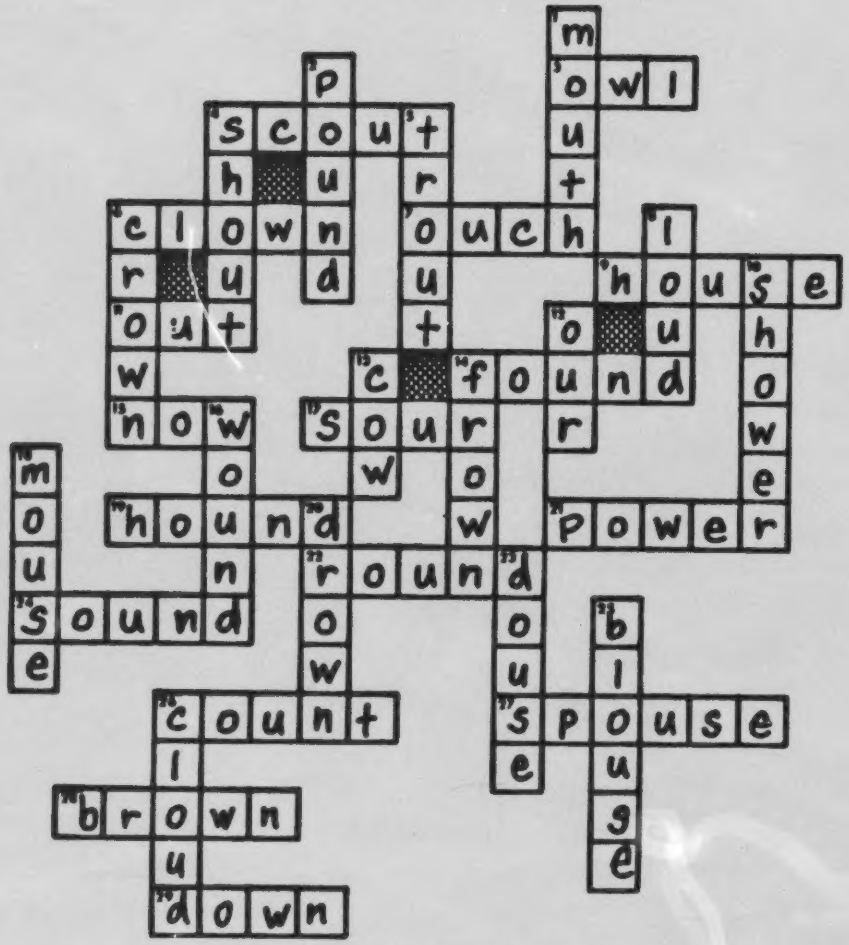
/ū/ spelled *u..e, oo, ew, ue*


true
drew
tube
blue
blew
brew
pool
grew
plume
tune
moon
glue
cool
clue
chew
prune
food
rude
soon
spoon
stew
strew
new
rooster
threw
dune
flew
dew

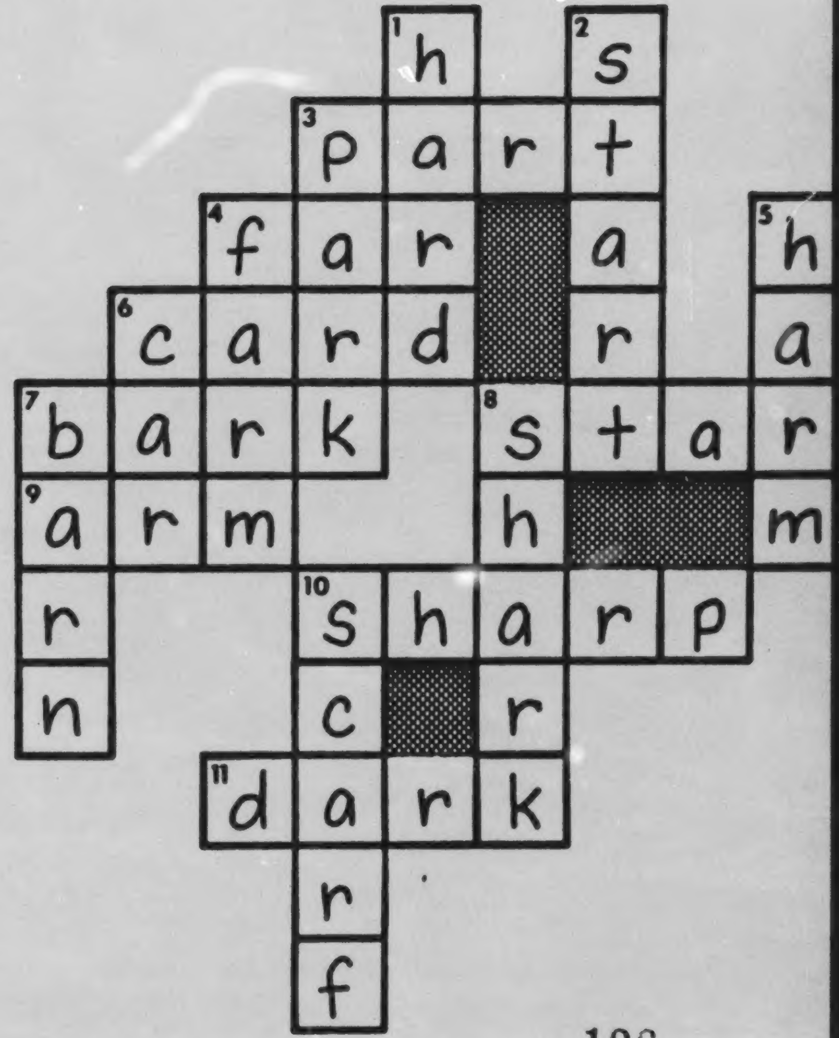
9. /u̇/ spelled *u, oo*


1 bull
brook
2 cook
3 book
bush
4 stood
5 push
pull
6 full
wool
7 look
foot
8 put
10 good

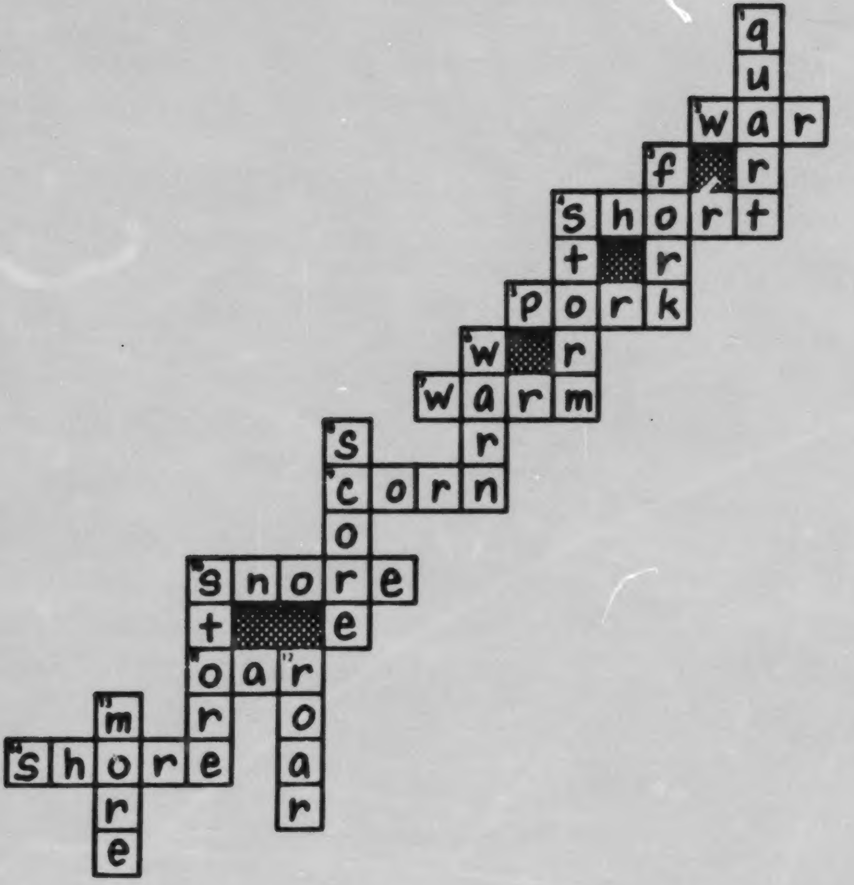
10. /ou/ spelled *ou, ow*


mouth
owl
pound
scout
trout
shout
clown
ouch
loud
crown
house
shower
out
our
cow
found
now
wound
sour
row
mouse
hound
drown
power
round
douse
sound
count
spouse
cloud
brown
down

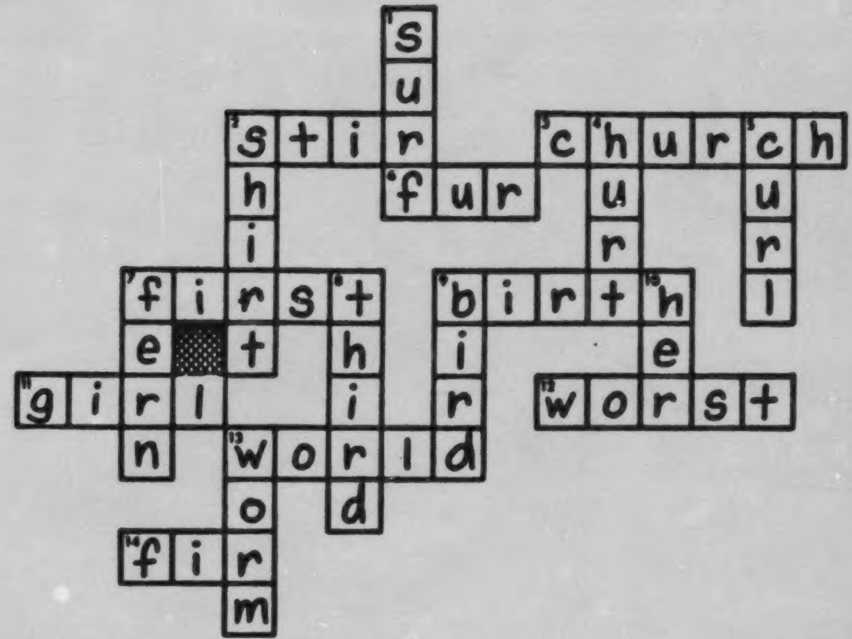
1. /är/ spelled *ar*


1 hard
2 start
3 part
4 far
5 harm
6 card
7 bark
8 star
8 shark
9 arm
10 sharp
10 scarf
11 dark

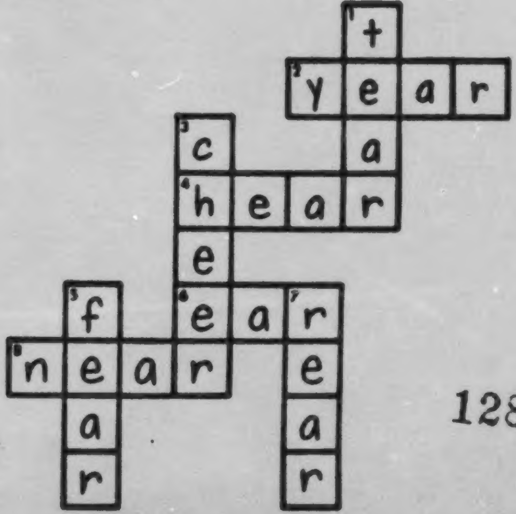
2. /ôr/ spelled *ore, oar, or, ar*


quart
war
for
short
fork
storm
pork
warn
warm
score
corn
snore
store
oar
roar
more
shore

3. /ėr/ spelled *er, ir, ur, or*


surf
stir
church
shirt
fur
hurt
curl
first
third
birth
bird
her
fern
girl
worst
world
worm
fir

4. /ir/ spelled *ear, eer*


tear
year
cheer
hear
fear
ear
rear
near

APPENDIX D

SPELLING RULES

AND

SPELLING CROSSWORD PUZZLES

QUESTIONNAIRE

You can help us prepare better instructional materials if you would fill in the attached questionnaire about the Spelling Rules and Spelling Crossword Puzzles.

If you use a particular puzzle, put a check in the "Used" column. Then note any good points or problems that you found.

If you do not use a particular puzzle, put a check in the "Not used" column. Then let us know why you didn't use it.

Please send the completed questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope to:

Ann Humes
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Thank you.

Name ______________________
School ______________________ } (optional)
Grade ______________________

	Name	Used	Good Points	Problems	Not Used	Why?
Consonant Spellings	1. Initial consonant clusters					
	2. Final consonant clusters					
	3. /f/ spelled *ff*; /l/ spelled *ll*; /s/ spelled *ss*					
	4. /k/ spelled *c*, *k*, *ck*					
	5. /f/, /k/, /l/, /s/ after long vowels					
	6. /ch/ spelled *ch*, *tch*					

	Name	Used	Good Points	Problems	Not Used	Why?
Vowel Spellings	1. /a/ spelled *a...e, ai, ay*					
	2. /ē/ spelled *ea, ee*					
	3. /ī/ spelled *i...e, y*					
	4. /ī/ spelled *i...e, y, igh, i*					
	5. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa*					
	6. /ō/ spelled *o...e, oa, ow, o*					

	Name	Used	Good Points	Problems	Not Used	Why?
Vowel Spellings	7. /ū/ spelled *u...e, oo*					
	8. /ü/ spelled *u...e, oo, ew, ue*					
	9. /u̇/ spelled *u, oo*					
	10. /ou/ spelled *ou, ow*					
Vowel-r Spellings	1. /är/ spelled *ar*					
	2. /ôr/ spelled *ore, oar, or, ar*					

	Name	Used	Good Points	Problems	Not Used	Why?
Vowel-r Spellings	3. /ėr/ spelled er, ir, ur, or					
	4. /ir/ spelled ear, eer					

Other Comments:

APPENDIX E

Elementary Spelling: What's Really Taught

Bruce Cronnell

Ann Humes

SWRL Educational Research and Development
Los Alamitos, California

The Elementary School Journal
Volume 81, Number 1
© 1980 by The University of Chicago
0013-5984/81/8101-0007$00.75

The content of elementary-school instruction is frequently based on the content of textbooks (1). Teachers usually do not have the time or the resources to devise all their own instruction, and they must depend on what is available. According to a study conducted by the Educational Products Information Exchange Institute (2), investigators in on-site observations noted that 90 percent of what is done in classrooms is based on commercially prepared materials. Consequently, what students learn is often what their textbooks present. In the study reported here, elementary-school spelling textbooks were examined to determine the nature of current spelling instruction. The results of the study add to our understanding of instruction in schools and provide data for developing assessment instruments based on both the content that students have been taught and the manner in which that content is presented and practiced.

This paper describes the three aspects of the study: the coding indexes used to describe spelling textbooks, the coding process, and some results of the analysis. The present study of spelling instruction is derived from similar earlier studies of reading and mathematics (3).

Coding indexes

To describe spelling textbooks, two indexes were prepared: the Content Index and the Performance Mode Index. The Content Index describes the spellings being taught; the Performance Mode Index describes the ways in which this content is presented and practiced.

The Content Index was derived from

previous studies of spelling (4, 5) and from a preliminary analysis of a number of spelling textbooks. The Index includes twenty-nine major categories of spelling content:

- Consonants
  - Invariable single consonants
  - Variable consonants
  - Consonant digraphs
  - Miscellaneous doubled consonants
  - Miscellaneous silent consonants
- Vowels
  - Short vowels
  - Long vowels
  - Vowel-r
- Affixation
  - Inflectional suffixes
  - Derivational suffixes and endings
  - Endings
  - Prefixes and beginnings
  - Affixation processes
- Structures
  - Dictionary skills
  - Homophones
  - Compounds
  - Irregular words
  - Contractions
  - Abbreviations
  - Syllabication
  - Special sets of words
  - Segments
  - Whole words
- Nonspelling
- Miscellaneous

Several features of this list should be noted. Nonspelling categories were included because many textbook series include these categories. Handwriting and Grammar are two examples. Some of the other categories listed here—Syllabication and Miscellaneous Silent Consonants—are of questionable value to spelling, but were included because they, too, are found in many series. The organization of the major categories was determined in part by the computer program that had been established for the previous research in reading and mathematics. However, the decision to use available programming rather than set up new programming did not have a serious effect on either coding or analysis.

Each major category includes up to 50 subcategories that define specific spelling content. Most of these subcategories are mutually exlusive, for example, short /e/ spelled *e*, short /e/ spelled *ea*. However, when appropriate, another subcategory can be used in conjunction with the preceding subcategories to delineate specific uses; for example, the position of a spelling—initial, medial, or final—can be indicated. In most major categories, an "Other" code was established to permit coverage of unspecified content of low frequency.

The Performance Mode Index was derived from a description of the instructional specifications for a research-based spelling program (6). The performance modes were numbered 51 through 99 so that they could be used in conjunction with all 50 content subcategories previously described. Performance modes numbered 51 through 60 are verbs describing the motor skills that the student must use to complete the textbook exercises; two examples are "underline" and "write." Performance modes numbered 61 through 99 are noun phrases, that is, direct objects of the verbs. These noun phrases describe the stimulus-and-response characteristics of the textbook exercise. Two examples of these categories are "word that rhymes" and "word for picture." Together, the verbs and the noun phrases form directions for completing the exercises: "underline word that rhymes," "write word for picture." A variety of performance modes in textbook exercises can be described by the many possible combinations of the verbs and the noun phrases.

Procedures

Seven commonly used commercial spelling textbook series were selected for initial coding (7–13). Each instructional exercise was coded for a major category of content.

the purported use of phonics, rule-based approaches, spelling textbooks commonly are concerned with teaching words rather than spellings.

The seven spelling series analyzed differ not only in content but also in the amount and the kind of instruction and practice they offer. Five programs provide instruction and practice on consonant clusters (blends); the other two programs provide no explicit instruction on clusters. However, words that have consonant clusters are included in all series; thus students' ability to spell such words may vary considerably, depending on the amount and the nature of instruction and practice in their particular textbooks.

Analysis of the performance modes provides a description of the spelling practice that students receive. Frequently textbooks offer little practice. Spelling books are usually similar in length; but, at the same grade level, the number of responses per page varies considerably from program to program. Because time on task may be important in school success (14), programs that offer little practice may produce poorer spellers than programs that offer more practice.

Additionally, the relevance of the spelling practice is often questionable. Every program has exercises that seem suspect; one example suggests the irrelevance that may be found. (The program will not be named; examples could be cited from all programs.) In a second grade lesson on *wh* (which occurs only initially in words), students write *wh* only eight times; for the remaining 18 items, they write the endings of words beginning with *wh*. Although relevance is hard to measure, it clearly influences students' learning; students cannot be expected to learn from practice that does not focus on the content to be learned.

A disturbing feature of most spelling programs is that they rarely require students to perform realistic spelling tasks. In "real-world" spelling, students must generate a spelling on their own, in response to a need, internal or external. Thus the purpose of spelling instruction should be to prepare students to spell words independently. However, the practice provided by spelling books most commonly involves writing the words that are printed on the page. Sometimes the spelling task explicitly directs students to copy words. More often the task requires students to choose a listed word and write it—another kind of copying task. Some tasks can be completed without looking at the words printed on the page; however, some, if not many, students probably complete all their spelling practice by merely copying the words printed on the page. This kind of practice is not in keeping with the goal of self-generated spelling, a goal that textbooks frequently ignore, although a wide range of appropriate formats for practice could be used (6). (Students might be asked to spell a word for a picture, or a word that completes a given sentence, or a word that fits a particular story content, or a word that has a specified sound.)

Conclusion

This study of spelling textbooks adds to our understanding of what students are exposed to when commercially prepared materials are used to teach spelling in elementary schools. This knowledge is particularly valuable in designing assessment instruments, for it helps in the construction of tests that parallel instruction. To test students on what they have not been taught is unfair; analysis of the content and the nature of instruction is a necessary preliminary step to designing tests that accurately assess learning.

References

1. The work upon which this article is based was performed pursuant to Grant No. OB-NIE-G-78-0209 with the National Institute of Education, Department of

Health, Education, and Welfare. Larry Gentry, Teanna Boscon, and Roxanne Denson contributed to the coding and the data analysis described here.

2. Educational Products Information Exchange Institute. *Report on a National Study of the Nature and the Quality of Instructional Materials Most Used by Teachers and Learners.* Report No. 76. New York, New York: Educational Products Information Exchange Institute, 1976.
3. A. Buchanan and P. Milazzo. "Designing an Instruction-Referenced System for Large-Scale Evaluation of School Achievement." Paper presented at the Third Annual Conference of the California Society of Educational Program Auditors and Evaluators, Los Angeles, California, May, 1977.
4. B. Cronnell. *Beginning Spelling: A Linguistic Review of Six Spelling Series.* Technical Report No. 35. Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1971.
5. P. Russell. *An Outline of English Spelling.* Technical Report No. 55. Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1975.
6. A. Humes. *Instructional Specifications for the SWRL Spelling Program.* Technical Note No. 3-76-07. Los Alamitos, California: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1976.
7. H. F. Benthul, E. A. Anderson, A. M. Utech, and M. V. Biggy. *Spell Correctly.* Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett, 1971.
8. T. E. Glim and F. S. Manchester. *Basic Spelling.* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Lippincott, 1977 (revised edition).
9. W. Kottmeyer and A. Claus. *Basic Goals in Spelling.* New York, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976 (fifth edition).
10. R. Madden and T. Carlson. *Harbrace Spelling Program.* New York, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974.
11. W. N. Novicky, S. Dorocak, M. C. Faulhaber, M. Himes, K. McNerney, R. Petruziello, and R. Wolfert. *Growth in Spelling.* River Forest, Illinois: Laidlaw, 1975.
12. L. L. Ort and E. E. Wallace. *Word Book.* Chicago, Illinois: Rand McNally, 1976.
13. O. Thomas, I. D. Thomas, and A. Lutkus. *The World of Spelling.* Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1978.
14. J. B. Carroll. "A Model of School Learning," *Teachers College Record, 64,* (May, 1963), 723–33.

B. Grades 5 and 6

STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

GRADES 5 AND 6

I. 1980 Survey of Essential Skills--Composition: Results for grades 5 and 6 . . . . Bruce Cronnell

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: 1980 Survey of Essential Skills: Categories and skills for grades 5 and 6

II. Helping students write more and write better . . . . . . Ann Humes

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: Helping students to write more and write better

III. Sentence combining . . . . Joseph Lawlor

  A. Presentation

  B. Handout: Sample sentence-combining exercises

    1. Student worksheets
    2. Teacher's edition
    3. Questionnaire

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS--COMPOSITION

RESULTS FOR GRADES 5 AND 6

Bruce Cronnell

A. Presentation

B. Handout: 1980 Survey of Essential Skills:
Categories and skills for grades 5 and 6

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS - COMPOSITION

RESULTS FOR GRADES 5 AND 6

I'm sure you're all familiar with the Survey of Essential Skills. SWRL developed this test under a contract with the Los Angeles Unified School District, and we think it's a pretty good measure of student abilities. Today I'm going to talk about results on the Composition section, generally at the District level. You already know what your school results are (and I don't), so we thought you'd like to know what went on in the whole District. However, when I talk about the writing sample, I will be able to share some of the information we obtained from looking at a number of papers from a school in this Area (along with other schools).

First, let's look at the 1979 and the 1980 SES's. We think that the 1980 SES is much more difficult than the 1979 SES. (We also think it's a better test than the 1979 SES--both SWRL and the District learned a lot from the 1979 experience.)

Since the 1980 SES is more difficult than the 1979 SES, we naturally expected that scores would go down. But, lo and behold, the scores usually went up--generally by 6-8 points at each grade level. I can't be sure of what this means, but I suspect that you teachers are putting more emphasis on writing, and naturally the students are doing better. The only grade level where there wasn't improvement was grade 3. We're not sure why this happened (although we're looking into it). But overall, things got better in 1980, and we're expecting that things will get better in 1981. So I think you can all congratulate yourselves on the good job you're doing teaching composition.

Before I begin to talk about specific results, I want to say something about the nature of the SES. Since it's given to a large number of students (generally over 30,000) at each grade level, and since the District wants to know what the results are, the test must use multiple-choice items. Now, composition is really a constructive process--that is you produce things, not choose things. Thus, a multiple-choice test isn't really the best way to assess composition skills. But, given the testing constraints, it's the only way. Otherwise, teachers would have to score all the test--not just the writing sample. Therefore, some of the problems that students have on the SES may be because of the nature of the test, and it might be that they could do better if they constructed their answers rather than chose them.

Now for some more specific results. (Individual skills and sample items are given on the handout.)

Word Processing. The first category on the SES--for grade 5 only--was Word Processing. Students had considerable difficulty with selecting the appropriate verb form to use when they had to choose between past tense forms and past participle forms; for example, wrote vs. written. However, they did quite well with synonyms and antonyms, although they had more problems choosing the correct spelling of a homonym.

Sentence Processing. The next category was Sentence Processing. Fifth graders had a great deal of difficulty in recognizing the subject and predicate in a sentence. Since there were only two choices (either subject or predicate), students had a 50% chance of being correct; their actual scores weren't much higher. Knowledge of grammatical terms like "subject" and "predicate" isn't really of much value in learning to write better, but it is required by the District Continuum, so I'm afraid you'll still have to teach it unless you can convince the District to change the Continuum. Fifth graders also had to combine simple sentences to form compound sentences; this was no problem.

Sixth-grade Sentence Processing also required recognition of sentence parts. This was still very difficult. The average score in the District was below 50%. Sixth graders also had to combine sentences using relative clauses; they did well with this.

Paragraph Development. In the Paragraph Development category, fifth graders did quite well choosing the correct transitional word to connect sentences. They had somewhat more difficulty in proofreading sentences. They could proofread better for spelling and capitalization than for punctuation.

Sixth graders had more problems with Paragraph Development. They did OK when they had to choose the sentence that should come next in a story, but they had more trouble choosing the correct order for sentences. This might be a problem with the format, which required a lot of reading. But unfortunately, there's no way to test this skill with multiple-choice items without requiring reading. The really serious problem with sixth-grade Paragraph Development was in deciding where a new paragraph should begin when writing conversation. The rule is that a new paragraph begins when a new speaker begins--choice C on the handout. This was a very great problem in the District--only 20% of the students were correct (which is even below the chance level).

Organizational Skills. The next category was Organizational Skills--outlining--and both fifth and sixth graders scored about the same--and not surprisingly they didn't score very well. Fifth graders had problems with capitalizing the first word in a topic, in recognizing correct indentation of topics, and in recognizing correct numbering and lettering of topics. However, they did much better in choosing which content would fit in an outline.

Sixth graders were given an outline and four paragraphs based on that outline. They had to decide whether the paragraphs matched the outline exactly, whether the paragraphs didn't have all the information from the outline, or whether the paragraphs had all the information, but in the wrong order. Making these decisions was difficult.

Dictionary/Reference Sources. In the Dictionary/Reference Sources category, fifth graders did quite well using guide words to locate an entry. Sixth graders also did quite well with their three skills: alphabetizing by the fourth and fifth letters, recognizing words spelled with dictionary symbols, and choosing the appropriate reference sources to use to find information.

Spelling. For Spelling, fifth graders did pretty well with the three skills assessed--final consonants, vowel digraphs, and compound words. Sixth graders also did rather well, considering that they were tested on nine different skills and that the format used--choosing the correctly spelled word--may not have been familiar to them.

Mechanics. The next category was Mechanics, and fifth graders did rather well. The first three skills listed on the handout were combined for testing and were no problem. Students also had no trouble capitalizing states and countries, although they had a more difficulty capitalizing book titles. They could use commas to separate items in a series and could use exclamation points correctly. They had more problems using a comma with a quotation, and they did better when the quotation came at the end of the sentence than when it came at the beginning of the sentence. Their greatest difficulty was in knowing where to hyphenate a word to break it at the end of a line.

Students receive a lot of practice with syllabication in their spelling books, but they apparently haven't learned the practical reason to break words into syllables--to divide them at the ends of lines.

Scores for sixth grade Mechanics were pretty poor--averaging not much more than 50%. Using commas after direct address was OK, but the other two skills were difficult. Students had problems with apostrophes in possessives, especially with the s-apostrophe form for plural possessives--they didn't score much above the chance level. And even more difficult than all the possessives was choosing a colon (rather than a comma) to follow the greeting in a business letter.

These difficult sixth grade skills are generally taught in language arts textbooks, but students apparently need more practice with them.

Writing Sample. Finally we come to the sixth-grade Writing Sample. Over 80% of the scores in the District were acceptable. I think this is quite good since the Writing Sample required students to compose a persuasive letter and to use their best writing skills.

Students did quite well in stating a point of view. They had a little more trouble describing their feelings in specific words and including reasons to support their opinion. However, they tended to include content conventions appropriate for a personal letter. We read over 200 of these letters, and a lot of them were really good--interesting to read.

Students did quite well with the format of the letter. They generally included all the letter parts and placed them correctly on the page.

But students had more problems with form skills. Although legible writing and correct paragraph indentation was fairly good, performance on the rest of the skills indicated some weaknesses. Joe Lawlor's presentation on sentence combining describes ways to help improve students' writing of complete sentences with correct grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

As I mentioned before, we read some of the Writing Samples that were sent to us. We also rescored them and compared our scores with the scores given by the original teachers. Not surprisingly, the scores were usually very much the same. This goes to show that the scoring system can be easily used to get reliable indications of how well students write.

For the most part, we were pleased with the letters written by sixth graders. Of course, there were some very bad letters; a few students clearly need a lot of help in composition. But most of the letters showed us that sixth graders can indeed write. (And Ann Humes' presentation suggests some ways to help your students become better writers.) Not only can most students write, but a number of them also are very good. I think you've all got several students in your classes with a lot of writing ability that you can foster, along with the rest of the students that you can help develop into better writers.

1980 SURVEY OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Categories and Skills for Grades 5 and 6

WORD PROCESSING

Grade 5

Selects and uses verbs appropriately. (past tense vs. past participle. e.g., wrote-written)

Identifies and uses homonyms (e.g., bare-bear), synonyms (e.g., walk-stroll), and antonyms (e.g., big-small) appropriately.

(no Word Processing skills assessed in grade 6)

SENTENCE PROCESSING

Grade 5

Identifies parts of sentences (e.g., subject/predicate).

Combines simple sentences to form compound and complex sentences. (only compound sentences assessed)

Example: Dusty was big. Pat was little.

A. Dusty was big, but Pat was little.
B. Dusty was big, then Pat was little.
C. Dusty was big, or Pat was little.

Grade 6

Identifies parts of sentences (e.g., subject/predicate).

Identifies and uses relative clauses that begin with who, which, that.

Example: I saw the tiger. It was running.

A. I saw the tiger, it was running.
B. I saw the tiger which it was running.
C. I saw the tiger that was running.

PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT

Grade 5

Uses/identifies transitional words and phrases to make paragraphs and sentences flow smoothly.

Edits and proofreads paragraphs for final copy.

--spelling, punctuation, capitalization

Grade 6

Composes a paragraph describing a sequence of times or events.

--choosing sentence that comes next in story
--ordering sentences correctly

Example: Going to School

I. John entered his classroom.
II. John walked to school.
III. John sat at his seat.

What is the right order for these sentences?

A. I, II, III
B. III, II, I
C. II, I, III

Writes paragraphs showing conversation.

Example:

Peter and Ana were walking home from school. Ⓐ They were carrying their jackets. Ⓑ "Boy, it's warm today," said Ana. Ⓒ "Yes," Peter said, it's too hot to even walk. Ⓓ I wish we could go swimming."

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Grade 5

Constructs an outline independently.

--capitalizing the first word in a topic
--indenting topics appropriately
--numbering and lettering appropriately
--recognizing what belongs in an outline

Grade 6

Uses an outline to prepare a report.

--Given an outline and paragraphs based on that outline, the student makes one of the following choices:

A. The paragraph matches the outline exactly.
B. The paragraph does not have all the information from the outline.
C. The paragraph has all the information from the outline, but it is not in the right order.

DICTIONARY/REFERENCE SOURCES

Grade 5

Uses guide words to locate an entry.

Grade 6

Alphabetizes by the fourth and fifth letters.

Uses and interprets diacritical markings.

Identifies and uses various reference sources in the library.

SPELLING

Grade 5

Identifies and spells final consonant sounds. (ph, ge, dge, mb, ce, se)

Identifies and spells vowel digraphs. (ea-/e/, ie-/ē/, ie-/ī/, ou-/u/, ew-/ū/)

Identifies and spells compound words. (choosing the word to complete a compound)

Grade 6

Identifies and spells words with r-controlled vowels.

Spells plurals by changing f to v and adding es.

Example: calf + s

A. calves
B. calfs
C. calvs

Spells new words by changing y to i and adding es.

Drops final e prior to adding ing suffix.

Changes words to adjectives by adding -able or -ful.

Spells words by adding noun-forming endings (e.g., -er, -ness, -tion).

Changes words to adverbs by adding -ly.

Changes spelling/sound of words when adding certain suffixes. (e.g., musician, instruction).

Forms irregular plurals by changing root words. (e.g., foot, foots, feet)

MECHANICS IN WRITING

Grade 5

Capitalizes the first letters in titles, Mrs., Miss, Ms., Mr., and Dr.
Uses capital letters in abbreviations.
Uses periods at end of abbreviations and initials.

Example: Which name is capitalized and punctuated correctly?

A. dr. Jones
B. Dr. Jones
C. Dr Jones
D. dr Jones

Capitalizes the first letters in names of states and countries.

Capitalizes the first, last and important words in a title or bibliography.

Uses commas to separate items in a series.

Identifies and uses exclamation point appropriately.

Uses comma in quotation.

Uses hyphen in hyphenated words and in break of word at end of line. (only break of word at end of line assessed)

Grade 6

Uses comma after direct address.

Uses apostrophe in singular and plural possessives.

Uses a colon when writing dialogues or the greeting in a business letter and when introducing a series. (only business-letter greeting assessed)

WRITING SAMPLE

(no Writing Sample in grade 5)

Grade 6

Content:

States a point of view.
Describes feelings in specific words.
Includes reasons to support opinion.
Includes content conventions appropriate for a personal letter.
Shows creativity and originality.

Format:

Includes all parts of a personal letter.
Places letter parts correctly on the page.

Form:

Uses complete sentences.
Uses correct grammar.
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.
Spells correctly.
Writes legibly and indents paragraphs.

11

HELPING STUDENTS WRITE MORE AND WRITE BETTER

Ann Humes

A. Presentation

B. Handout: Helping students to write more
and write better

HELPING STUDENTS WRITE MORE AND WRITE BETTER

Ann Humes

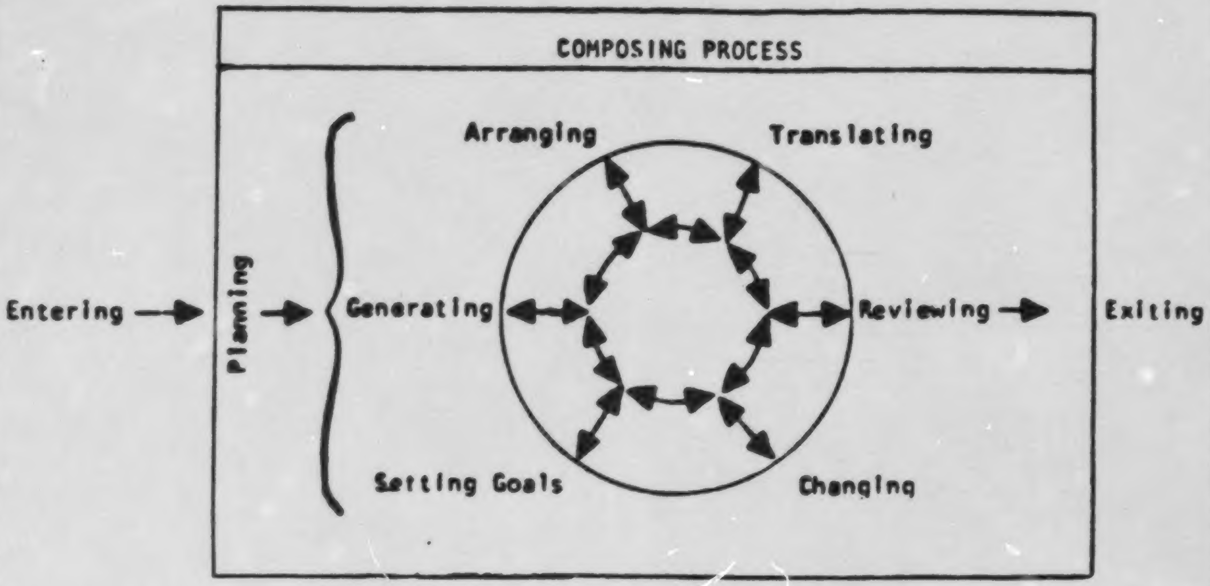
In response to the public's concern about students' ability to write, there has been an increase in the interest in writing research. Yet as recently as 1972, for every $3000 of school money spent on reading, only $1 was spent on writing. And the little research that was done focused on the products that students write, not on the process of how they write.

Fortunately, that focus has been changing. Now researchers and teachers are looking more and more at the process of writing. Because people have begun to look at how people write rather than what they write, researchers have discovered that writing is a cyclical process. Some of the current thinking is reflected in the model of the process in Figure 1.

I want to discuss how to help students with three of the important subprocesses in the model: generating, arranging, and changing (or revising as it is more commonly called). After that I want to give you some tips on getting students to write more without increasing your paper load; in fact, these suggestions may even help decrease your present paper load.

One of the big problems for students (and for all writers for that matter) is generating ideas--they don't know how to get ideas. A common protest is "I can't think of anything to say."

One of the ways students can stimulate their thinking is through word associating; besides, it is fun for them to do, and they can do it alone, in small groups, or with the whole class. For example, if they are going to write about baseball, have them word-associate for the word "baseball" and write these words down. Then when they have generated enough


COMPOSING PROCESS
Entering
Planning
Arranging
Translating
Generating
Reviewing
Exiting
Setting Goals
Changing

Planning:

- Setting Goals: Conceptualizing the individual tactics for solving the writing problem.
- Generating: Gathering information to write about, whether that information is material from external sources or is content within the writer's mind.
- Arranging: Ordering content.

Translating: Transforming thought into written text (actual writing).

Reviewing: Looking over text to determine whether to do more goal setting, generating, arranging, or changing of text, or to exit from the process.

Changing: Altering the content or form of the text (revision).

Figure 1: Current Interpretation of the Composing Process

associations, they can choose which words represent ideas they want to include in their compositions, identifying their selections by circling them. (See Figure 2)

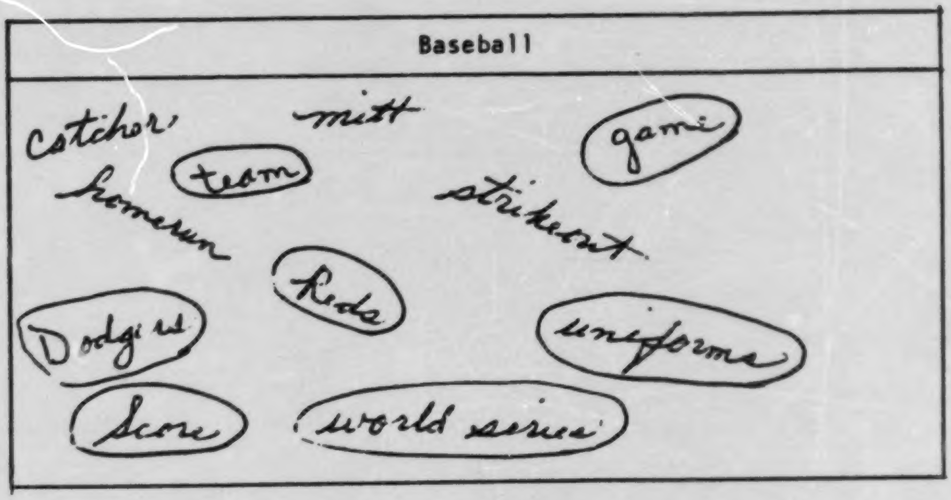


Figure 2. Word Associating

Another technique that we're all familiar with, brainstorming, is related to word associating--it is more like idea associating, and frequently it is done in small groups as well as in the whole-classroom situation. One person's idea or thought will stimulate someone else's thinking.

One of the simplest formalized techniques that helps students generate ideas is to have students ask themselves sets of questions about the topic or the broad area of interest. Table 1 gives examples of the kinds of questions students can be taught to ask themselves to help probe their minds for ideas. These sets of questions are listed by the type of writing that parallels a category of writing skills listed in the LAUSD Continuum. The sets can be written on the board or on charts and then posted in the room so students can refer to the questions when they need them for writing.

Table I

Formalized Sets of Questions for Generating Content by Writing Type

---

QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED WHEN DESCRIBING SOMETHING:

1. What does it look like?
2. What does it smell like?
3. What does it sound like?
4. What does it feel like?
5. What does it taste like?

QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED WHEN WRITING A STORY:

1. What happened first?
2. What happened next? Next?
3. What happened last?
4. When did it happen?
5. Where did it happen?
6. Who did it happen to?

QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED WHEN WRITING SOMETHING FACTUAL:

1. What is the topic?
2. What part of the topic should I write about?
3. How can I illustrate the topic?
4. What questions can I ask about the topic?
5. What are the answers to these questions?
6. Do I have any problems with this topic?
7. What are the solutions to those problems?

QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED WHEN WRITING SOMETHING PERSUASIVE:

1. What opinion can a person have about this topic?
2. Which of them is my opinion?
3. What reasons can others give to show my opinion is wrong?
4. What reasons can I give to show that my opinion is right?
5. What can I say to prove that my reason is a good reason?

Some of the sets of questions are very simple. For example, look at the questions that students can ask themselves when they are going to describe something. Questions for writing a story are also relatively simple.

The questions that can be asked when writing something factual are a little more difficult, but with practice, students can use these questions successfully. Even if they can't answer all of the questions, those they can answer will generate enough ideas to get the students started writing. The same is true for the questions pertaining to persuasive writing.

Once ideas are generated, they must be arranged in appropriate presentation order. Students who learn some principles of arranging will also be better able to understand outlining skills. One way to help students develop the ability to arrange their ideas is to have them write their ideas on cards or pieces of paper that they physically reorder--they just shuffle and reshuffle the cards, stacking the deck so that they get ideas that are closely related next to each other.

Clustering is a technique used for ordering content generated by word associating. (In fact, some people use the term "clustering" to refer to both word associating and its concomitant ordering.) When many words have been produced, the related words are clustered into groups by larger circles and then ordered within those clusters. When fewer words are associated, students may either draw arrows from one circled word to another or number the words in presentation order. (See Figure 3.)

Students also need to learn specific arrangement plans, and Table II lists some component skills for types of writing; a kind of arranging is listed for each writing type (See point 4). These skills have been translated into student language in the lists in Table III. The teacher-language

Table II

Important Skills for Different Types of Writing

SENSORY/DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

1. Uses sensory terms to describe appearance, sound, odor, taste, touch.
2. Uses specific rather than general terms.
3. Selects important features/details to focus on.
4. Uses spatial ordering (e.g., vertical, horizontal).
5. Uses connectors to show spatial relationships (e.g., on top of, beside, in the corner).

CREATIVE/NARRATIVE WRITING

1. Includes only those events that are appropriate for the story.
2. Develops characters in some way, if only by brief descriptive terms.
3. Includes a beginning, middle, and ending for the story.
4. Uses chronological ordering.
5. Describes (or at least refers to) a setting.
6. Uses time connectors (e.g., next, later that day).

FACTUAL WRITING

1. Includes important facts/details.
2. Uses precise language.
3. Writes sentences that reflect an emphasis on clarity rather than creativity.
4. Uses chronological or logical (e.g., also, on the other hand) connectors.
5. Arranges information in an order that is logical and appropriate for the content (e.g., recipes are presented step-by-step; news stories are arranged so the important information is presented first).

PERSUASIVE WRITING

1. States an opinion.
2. Includes reasons for the opinion.
3. Includes evidence to support reasons.
4. Orders arguments by effectiveness and importance (least to most).
5. Uses logical connectors (sometimes chronological, often cause-effect; e.g., because, for that reason).
6. Includes a restatement of opinion in a conclusion.

Table III

Student Version of Skills for Different Types of Writing

WHEN YOU DESCRIBE SOMETHING, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Use words that tell about how it looks, smells, tastes, feels, sounds.
2. Use exact words, like sweet, to describe how something tastes rather than good.
3. Describe the most important parts. For example, if you are describing what someone looks like, the person's eyes are more important than his or her big toe.
4. Describe the thing in space order, like from side to side, top to bottom, inside to outside.
5. Use words that show the order of the parts, like on top of, next to, beside, in the corner.

WHEN YOU WRITE A STORY, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Write only about things that fit the story idea.
2. Write something that tells what your characters are like. For example, tell what they look like, show how they talk, tell their opinions.
3. Include a beginning, a middle, and an ending to your story.
4. Tell about what happens in the order that it happens.
5. Tell about the setting. (The setting is where the story happens.)
6. Connect your sentences with words that show time order, like then, later that day, the next morning.

WHEN YOU WRITE INFORMATION OR WRITE TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Write about the most important things or ideas.
2. Use exact words. For example, use words like spread rather than put when you tell someone how to spread frosting on a cake.
3. Write clear sentences that say exactly what you mean.
4. Use words that connect your ideas, like also, on the other hand, because, after that, next.
5. Put your ideas in an order that makes the best sense for what you are saying. For example, if you are writing directions, write steps in the order that the reader is supposed to do them.

WHEN YOU WANT TO CONVINCE SOMEONE THAT YOUR OPINION IS RIGHT, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. State what your opinion is.
2. Give the reasons why you have that opinion.
3. Give some proof that shows that your reasons are good.
4. Put your reasons in order by their importance--begin with the least important reason and end with the best reason.
5. Connect your sentences with words like because, for that reason, also, next.
6. In your conclusion, state your opinion again.

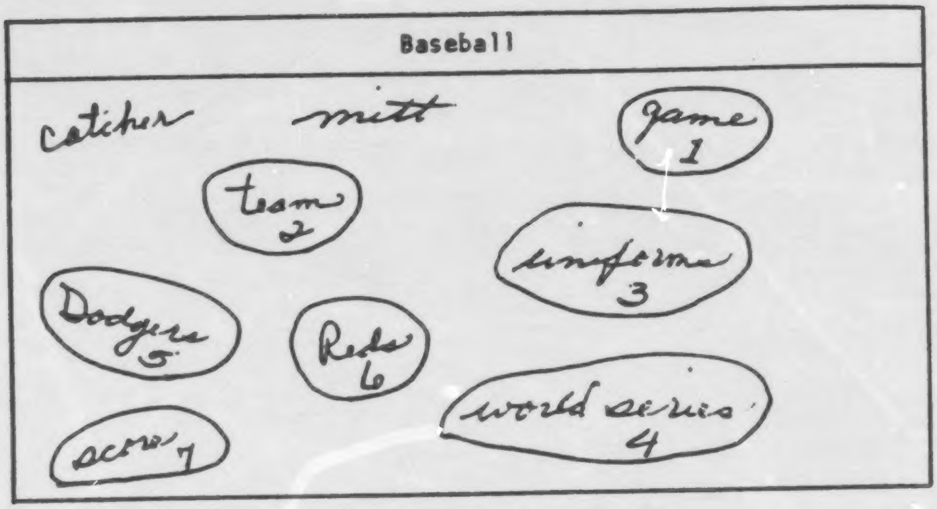


Figure 3. Arranging Content Generated during Word Associating

lists have been provided because the component skills lose much in translation, and the original lists help you understand what is involved in these skills. You may need or want to teach writing types by reference to these skills. Listed under sensory/descriptive writing, for example, is the skill "Uses spatial ordering." Students can learn to arrange the descriptive content they have generated into side-to-side order, for instance--"on the right side of the room . . ., in the corner . . ., in the middle of the room . . ., on the other side . . . ." A misordering can easily be pointed out; in fact, other students can be quite helpful in pointing out what is out of place.

Incidentally, the student version of these lists of skills relevant to writing different kinds of compositions can also be posted around the room so that students can refer to the skills when they have to describe something, or write a story, or tell how something works, or persuade someone about their opinion. And teachers can use these lists to facilitate evaluation of the students' compositions.

Once students get their ideas arranged on paper, these same lists of skills can be used by students to guide their editing and revising. For example, students can read their papers to see if they can find a more specific descriptive word--if they have used the word "good" to describe how something tastes, they should change such a word to something like "sweet." They can look at the writing to see if they need to add in such connectors as on top of. Also, in relation to the skill "Describes the most important parts," students can ask themselves, "Was this an important thing to describe?"

Revision is also facilitated through the concept of audience. Students can ask themselves whether they have used the word, reason, or idea--whatever--that is best to use for the person who will read what they are writing. The concept of audience can also be used to direct revision in another way. The student can write the paper for one audience and revise it for other audiences. For example, they might write for a friend as audience to convince that friend to watch a television program. Then they could revise first for the teacher as audience and then for their parents. The reason a friend would watch the program might be that it is funny; the teacher, it's educational; their parents, it will give us something to discuss.

Regular daily practice is important, but the teacher is immediately confronted with two problems.

First, how do you find time for writing in an already over-scheduled day? You can take some time away from the subject area--reading--that received $3,000 for every $1 spent on writing. Researchers have made this adjustment in elementary schools and found that reading scores went up--less time was devoted to reading, but the students read better because of their work on writing.

The second problem pertains to the overworked teacher. How can you get students to write more without your having to grade more papers? There are several good approaches to solving this problem.

For one thing, you can have students write their own sentence-combining problems and give them to each other to work out. Once they have had some experience with sentence combining, they will enjoy writing their own problems. They will even find out how many ways their classmates can find to combine the sentences in their problems--combinations that never occurred to the writer of the problem. Students will think about and work with writing and sentence structure when they are developing the problems; they will also think about writing when they see others' solutions.

Freewriting is a really great technique for helping students to write more. After they are given two constraints, students start writing and do not stop moving their pencils until they are told to stop. The two constraints are (1) that they must not stop moving their pencils to think about spelling or punctuation or grammar or any of the rules and (2) that they must not stop moving the pencil even if they can't think of anything to say--they just keep writing, "I can't think of anything to say" until they come up with something, if only "I think this is a dumb thing to do." Eventually they will start coming up with ideas. This kind of writing is never to be graded or looked at for correctness. In fact, you don't have to look at it at all unless this is the only way you have to check to make sure they have done it.

Journal writing is another technique for getting students to write more without your doing more paper grading. It follows one of the same principles as freewriting--teachers do not look at the journals for correctness. Students write at least three sentences each day in their journals. They write about something they see, think about, feel confused about, or want to complain about. Some teachers collect these journals and write responses to the students--not to how they write, but to the students' concerns. This is a good practice if you have the time, and it gives the students first-hand experience with writing as a way of communicating. But even if you don't have time to respond, writing in the journal every day gives students important practice. Studies have shown that students who keep such journals improve their writing over the course of a school year.

Peer critiquing is another way to limit your paper-grading load. Students read each other's writing. They can do this with partners or in groups. Peer critiquing is difficult to initiate in the classroom; you will have to give students some guidelines on how to respond--let them know you want something more constructive than a cruel statement like "This is junk." Make sure also that they understand that you want them to say as much about ideas and arrangement as about correctness. One way to get students to do appropriate critiquing is to model the practice for them. A fringe benefit of peer critiquing is that it gets students to think and learn about what is good writing because they are not emotionally involved with the writing they are reviewing and they can see problems or good features that they might miss in their own writing.

These are just a few ideas for helping students write more and write better. That's what we at SWRL are interested in, and I'm sure you are as well.

HELPING STUDENTS TO WRITE MORE AND WRITE BETTER

Process vs. Product of Writing

Generating

1. Word associating
2. Brainstorming
3. Self-questioning (see p. 3)

Arranging

1. "Card-shuffling"
2. Clustering
3. Arrangements (see p. 4)

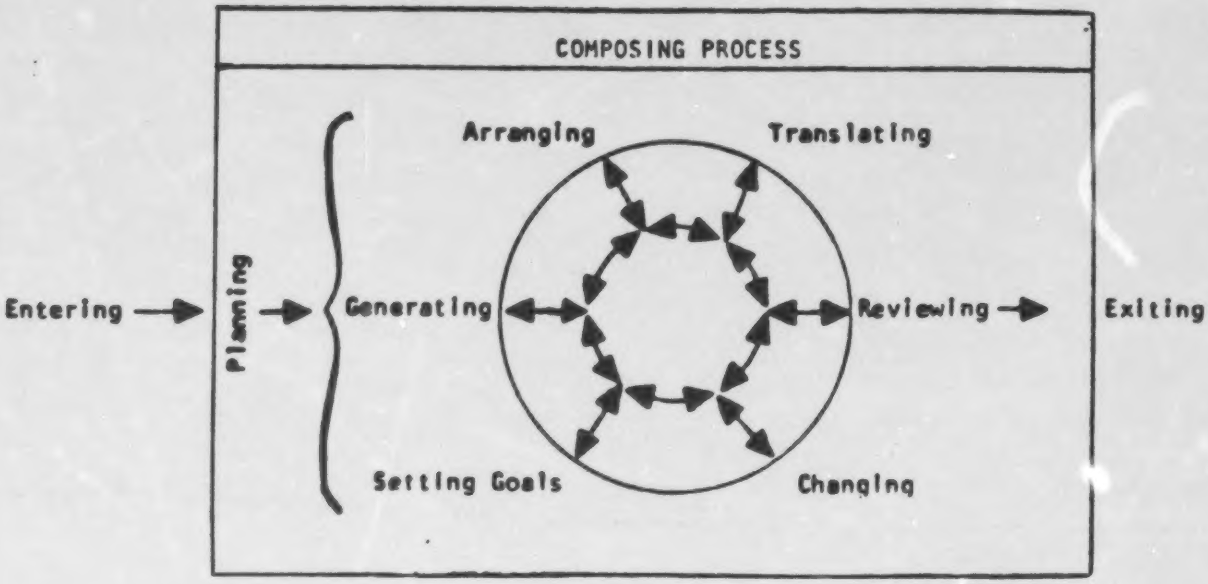
Revising

1. Component skills
2. Audience variety

The Paper Load

1. Sentence-combining problems
2. Freewriting
    (a) no attention to rules
    (b) no stopping
3. Journal writing
4. Peer critiquing

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661


COMPOSING PROCESS
Entering
Planning
Arranging
Translating
Generating
Reviewing
Exiting
Setting Goals
Changing

Planning:

Setting Goals:	Conceptualizing the individual tactics for solving the writing problem.
Generating:	Gathering information to write about, whether that information is material from external sources or is content within the writer's mind.
Arranging:	Ordering content.

Translating:	Transforming thought into written text (actual writing).
Reviewing:	Looking over text to determine whether to do more goal setting, generating, arranging, or changing of text, or to exit from the process.
Changing:	Altering the content or form of the text (revision).

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF STUDENT WRITING

Deliberate self-questioning is an important technique for improving the quality of writing. The sets of questions below represent the techniques students can use to improve their writing. Many other sets of questions can be devised, depending upon the kind of writing and the topic.

A. Questions that can be asked when describing something:

1. What does it look like?
2. What does it smell like?
3. What does it sound like?
4. What does it feel like?
5. What does it taste like?

B. Questions that can be asked when writing a story:

1. What happened first?
2. What happened next? Next?
3. What happened last?
4. When did it happen?
5. Where did it happen?
6. Who did it happen to?

C. Questions that can be asked when writing something factual:

1. What is the topic?
2. What part of the topic should I write about?
3. How can I illustrate the topic?
4. What questions can I ask about the topic?
5. What are the answers to these questions?
6. Do I have any problems with this topic?
7. What are the solutions to those problems?

D. Questions that can be asked when writing something persuasive:

1. What opinion can a person have about this topic?
2. Which of them is my opinion?
3. What reasons can others give to show my opinion is wrong?
4. What reasons can I give to show that my opinion is right?
5. What can I say to prove that my reason is a good reason?

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

IMPORTANT SKILLS FOR DIFFERENT MODES OF WRITING

A few fundamental skills important for writing different kinds of composition are listed below. These lists are not comprehensive, but they do include important component skills for students at the elementary level.

SENSORY/DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

1. Uses sensory terms to describe appearance, sound, odor, taste, touch.
2. Uses specific rather than general terms.
3. Selects important features/details to focus on.
4. Uses spatial ordering (e.g., vertical, horizontal).
5. Uses connectors to show spatial relationships (e.g., on top of, beside, in the corner).

CREATIVE/NARRATIVE WRITING

1. Includes only those events that are appropriate for the story.
2. Develops characters in some way, if only by brief descriptive terms.
3. Includes a beginning, middle, and ending for the story.
4. Uses chronological ordering.
5. Describes (or at least refers to) a setting.
6. Uses time connectors (e.g., next, later that day).

FACTUAL WRITING

1. Includes important facts/details.
2. Uses precise language.
3. Writes sentences that reflect an emphasis on clarity rather than creativity.
4. Uses chronological or logical (e.g., also, on the other hand) connectors.
5. Arranges information in an order that is logical and appropriate for the content (e.g., recipes are presented step-by-step; news stories are arranged so the important information is presented first).

PERSUASIVE WRITING

1. States an opinion.
2. Includes reasons for the opinion.
3. Includes evidence to support reasons.
4. Orders arguments by effectiveness and importance (least to most).
5. Uses logical connectors (sometimes chronological, often cause-effect; e.g., because, for that reason).
6. Includes a restatement of opinion in a conclusion.

Prepared by
Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

WHEN YOU DESCRIBE SOMETHING, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Use words that tell about how it looks, smells, tastes, feels, sounds.
2. Use exact words, like sweet, to describe how something tastes rather than good.
3. Describe the most important parts. For example, if you are describing what someone looks like, the person's eyes are more important than his or her big toe.
4. Describe the thing in space order, like from side to side, top to bottom, inside to outside.
5. Use words that show the order of the parts, like on top of, next to, beside, in the corner.

WHEN YOU WRITE A STORY, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Write only about things that fit the story idea.
2. Write something that tells what your characters are like. For example, tell what they look like, show how they talk, tell their opinions.
3. Include a beginning, a middle, and an ending to your story.
4. Tell about what happens in the order that it happens.
5. Tell about the setting. (The setting is where the story happens.)
6. Connect your sentences with words that show time order, like then, later that day, the next morning.

WHEN YOU WRITE INFORMATION OR WRITE TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. Write about the most important things or ideas.

2. Use exact words. For example, use words like spread rather than put when you tell someone how to spread frosting on a cake.

3. Write clear sentences that say exactly what you mean.

4. Use words that connect your ideas, like also, on the other hand, because, after that, next.

5. Put your ideas in an order that makes the best sense for what you are saying. For example, if you are writing directions, write steps in the order that the reader is supposed to do them.

WHEN YOU WANT TO CONVINCE SOMEONE THAT YOUR OPINION IS RIGHT, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO

1. State what your opinion is.

2. Give the reasons why you have that opinion.

3. Give some proof that shows that your reasons are good.

4. Put your reasons in order by their importance--begin with the least important reason and end with the best reason.

5. Connect your sentences with words like because, for that reason, also, next.

6. In your conclusion, state your opinion again.

III

SENTENCE COMBINING

Joseph Lawlor

A. Presentation

B. Handout: Sample sentence-combining exercises

C. Handouts: Sentence-combining lessons
  1. Student worksheets
  2. Teacher's edition
  3. Questionnaire

SENTENCE COMBINING

Joe Lawlor

Many of you who submitted suggestions for this workshop indicated that sentence structure was a particular problem in your students' writing. Recently at SWRL, we had a chance to look at some of the writing samples from the 1980 SES, and it was apparent to us that many students do have problems with sentences--problems such as run-on sentences, sentence fragments, awkward or unintelligible sentences. We might summarize these problems by saying that many students don't seem to have a "sense of the sentence." That is, they don't seem to understand what constitutes a single, complete, grammatical sentence.

Yet I am pretty sure that most of you would agree that your students generally speak in sentences. At least your students are able to put words together in an order that conveys meaning. So the problem is not really that students don't have a sense of the sentence. The problem is that students don't transfer their sentence sense from their oral language to their writing. The linguistic ability is there in their minds, but how do we get it out on paper?

The traditional method for helping student writers improve their sentences has been formal grammar study--diagramming sentences, identifying parts of speech, underlining subjects and predicates, labeling sentence parts, and so on. Oddly enough, though, research has consistently shown that formal grammar study does not improve writing, and that grammar study may actually hinder the development of writing skills.

But what are the alternatives? Obviously students need some very practical help in learning how to write mature, grammatical sentences.

Or, to put it another way, students need to learn how to apply their oral language abilities in their writing.

Let me illustrate with a sentence that might have been written by a typical fifth or sixth grader:

> My brother met a girl and I met the girl too and she owned
> a hamster and the hamster was little and it had a pink nose.

Does this kind of sentence look familiar? Often a student will leave out some of the *and*'s, stringing together one long run-on sentence. Or perhaps the student will arbitrarily punctuate or omit a word or two, leaving a sentence fragment like "Had a pink nose." At any rate, I am sure that most of you have seen sentences that look something like this in your students' writing. What's important about this sentence, though, is that there is a lot of content in it. The problem is that the content is not put together very well. If we break this sentence down, we find that it actually contains five separate sentences:

> My brother met a girl.
> I met a girl.
> The girl owned a hamster.
> The hamster was little.
> The hamster had a pink nose.

Now how do we get the student to put these five sentences together in a more effective way? Well, sentence combining is a technique for doing just that. In sentence-combining exercises, we provide students with a set of signals that show how the sentences should be put together:

> My brother met a girl.
> I m~~e~~t ~~a~~ g~~ir~~l.   (AND)
> The girl owned a hamster.   (WHO)
> The hamster was *little*.
> The hamster had a pink nose.   (THAT)

This is how the signals work. A word in parentheses moves to the front of the line on which it is written, and any repeated words are dropped. An underlined word is simply inserted into the sentence above it. Once we have shown the student how to use these signals, he or she can then combine the sentences to form the following:

> My brother and I met a girl who owned a little
> hamster that had a pink nose.

What I've actually illustrated here is a sentence-combining exercise. Notice that I didn't have to use any grammatical terms to explain how the signals work. Notice too that when the student has completed this exercise, he or she has formed a mature, complete sentence--the kind of sentence that we would like to see the student using in his or her own independent writing.

Sentence combining, then, is a technique for getting students to improve their written "sense of the sentence" through controlled practice. Studies over the past 15 years have shown that students who practice sentence combining do indeed end up writing better sentences, and, more importantly, the overall quality of their writing also improves.

Before going any further, I'd like you to try some of the sample exercises on the handout so that you can get a feel for what sentence combining is all about.

[see handout B: Sample sentence-combining exercises]

I have brought along a lesson packet that contains more than 130 sentence-combining exercises. When you use these lessons in your class, there are a few things to remember. First, sentence combining is not a comprehensive writing program. It is only meant to be a part of the total writing curriculum. Sentence combining is certainly no substitute for independent writing experiences. I would suggest that you spend about 10-15 minutes a day on sentence combining, up to about 30-45 minutes per week.

Second, sentence combining should be a regular part of instruction, not just a now-and-then activity. Exercises can be scheduled on a daily basis, or perhaps three times a week, but they should be done regularly. They should not be assigned as time fillers or as punishment.

Next, remember that students should say their responses out loud before they write them down. By listening to the sound of their responses, students can better judge the "correctness" of their sentences. You might want to use some of the exercises as a kind of choral reading activity. In this respect, sentence combining can be effective language practice for students who are limited English speakers.

Students should also experience success with sentence combining. You will notice that the lessons in the packet I have brought are sequenced in order of increasing difficulty. If you find that your students are having problems with the later lessons in the sequence, don't belabor the point. Skip those lessons and let students continue practicing with the signals that they are comfortable with.

A sentence-combining program should also include plenty of unsignaled exercises. Encourage students to experiment with different ways of combining a set of sentences. Class discussions can then focus on why one combination might "sound better" than others.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, remember that sentence combining should be fun. Studies have shown that students approach sentence combining with much the same enthusiasm that they have for puzzles and games. I would urge you to exploit this. If you wish, you can write some of your own sentence-combining exercises about things that your students are interested in: school events, holidays, movies, TV shows, sports, literature (or any other subject matter being studied in school). In addition, you can practice paragraph building with sentence-combining exercises. (You'll find some paragraph-length exercises in the lesson packet.) But above all, make the content of the exercises interesting so that students will really be motivated to solve them. I think you'll find that your students can learn to write better sentences by practicing sentence combining.

SAMPLE SENTENCE-COMBINING EXERCISES

1. Ana hit the ball.
~~Ana~~ sent it soaring. (AND)

2. Judy watched television.
She had finished her homework. (AFTER)

3. I bought my roller skates. (BEFORE . . .,)
I had to walk everywhere.

4. The player will get an award.
The player scores the most points. (WHO)

5. Lisa was very hungry. (SINCE . . .,)
She cooked the trout.
~~She cooked~~ the catfish. (AND)
She had caught the trout and the catfish. (THAT)

6. "Jaws" was a movie.
The movie was about a giant shark.

7. The house stood on a hill.
The house had been abandoned.

8. King Kong thought SOMETHING.
People liked to sit in his hand. (THAT)

9. Liz thinks SOMETHING.
Soccer is a great sport. (JUST JOIN)

10. Mork thinks SOMETHING.
The people have some customs. (THAT)
The people live on Earth. (WHO)
The customs are strange.

11. SOMETHING amazed Sharon.
She could combine sentences so easily. (IT . . . THAT)

____

12. SOMETHING is important.
Dracula sleeps during the day. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

____

13. (no signals)

The captain was confused by the signals.
The signals were coming from the planet below.
The captain told Mr. Spock SOMETHING.
Mr. Spock beams down.
Mr. Spock finds out SOMETHING.
The music was coming from somewhere.
The music was disco.

____

____

SENTENCE-COMBINING WORKSHEETS

Lessons 1-11

Prepared by

Joe Lawlor

Center for the Study of Writing Instruction
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

These worksheets may be duplicated for classroom use only.

© SWRL Educational Research and Development 1981

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-A

1. Ana hit the ball.
   ~~Ana~~ sent it soaring. (AND)

   ____

   ____

2. Tom fell to the ground.
   ~~Tom~~ ripped his uniform. (AND)

   ____

   ____

3. María reached with her glove.
   ~~María~~ caught the ball. (AND)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-B

1. Pat ordered a hamburger.
   ~~Pat~~ ~~ordered~~ a coke. (AND)

   ____

   ____

2. Juan had a hot dog.
   ~~Juan~~ ~~had~~ a milk shake. (AND)

   ____

   ____

3. Juan is Pat's friend.
   ~~Juan~~ ~~is~~ ~~Pat's~~ neighbor. (AND)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-C

1. Elena spoke clearly.
   ~~Elena~~ ~~spoke~~ calmly. (AND)

   ____

   ____

2. Her speech was short.
   ~~Her~~ ~~speech~~ ~~was~~ interesting. (AND)

   ____

   ____

3. Elena always seems relaxed.
   ~~Elena~~ ~~always~~ ~~seems~~ happy. (AND)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-Review

1. Magic leaped in the air.
~~Magic~~ caught the ball. (,)
~~Magic~~ slammed it through the basket. (, AND)

____

____

____

2. Kareem had 29 points.
~~Kareem had~~ 12 rebounds. (,)
~~Kareem had~~ 4 blocked shots. (, AND)

____

____

____

3. The crowd cheered happily.
~~The crowd cheered~~ noisily. (AND)

____

____

4. Magic is a good shooter.
Magic is an excellent rebounder.
Magic is a great ball handler.

____

____

____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 2-A

1. Judy watched television.
   She had finished her homework. (AFTER)

   ____

   ____

2. She went to bed.
   "Mork and Mindy" was over. (WHEN)

   ____

   ____

3. She dreamed about egg-shaped space ships.
   She slept. (WHILE)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 2-B

1. Isabel always watches the Rams play.
   They are her favorite team. (BECAUSE)

   ____

   ____

2. She claps and cheers.
   The Rams score a touchdown. (IF)

   ____

   ____

3. She thinks the Rams will win the Super Bowl next year.
   They have so many good players. (SINCE)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 2-C

1. I bought my roller skates. (BEFORE . . .,)
   I had to walk everywhere.

   ____

   ____

2. I first got my skates. (WHEN . . .,)
   I couldn't skate very well.

   ____

   ____

3. You know what you're doing. (UNLESS . . .,)
   You shouldn't try roller-skating tricks.

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 2 Review

1. Dave overslept this morning. (SINCE . . .,)
   He missed the bus.
   ~~He~~ had to walk to school. (AND)

   ____

   ____

   ____

2. The game was over. (WHEN . . .,)
   The players hugged the coach.
   ~~The players~~ lifted him up on their shoulders. (,)
   ~~The players~~ carried him from the field. (, AND)

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

3. Luke dived toward the planet.
   Luke fired the rocket.
   Luke escaped.
   The Empire fighters could catch him.

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 3-A

1. Lisa caught a trout.
   ~~The trout~~ weighed seven pounds. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

2. She showed the trout to the woman.
   ~~The woman~~ owned the bait shop. (WHO)

   ____

   ____

3. She gave Lisa a prize.
   ~~The prize~~ said "Biggest Fish of the Day." (THAT)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 3-B

1. The team will be the state champion.
~~The team~~ wins this game. (THAT)

____

____

2. The fans will see an exciting contest.
~~The fans~~ come to the game. (WHO)

____

____

3. The player will get an award.
~~The player~~ scores the most points. (WHO)

____

____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 3-C

1. Tom and José went to the theater.
   José's mother owns ~~the theater~~. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

2. The movie was funny.
   They saw ~~the movie~~. (JUST JOIN)

   ____

   ____

3. They ate all the popcorn.
   José's mother gave them ~~the popcorn~~. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-3 Review

1. Our team won the game. (AFTER . . .,)
The fans ran up to the players.
~~The fans~~ had waited near the end zone. (WHO)

2. Lisa was very hungry. (SINCE . . .,)
She cooked the trout.
~~She cooked~~ the catfish. (AND)
She had caught ~~the trout and the catfish~~. (THAT)

3. Some of these problems are hard.
We are doing these problems.
They don't have any signals.
The signals tell you how to combine the sentences.

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 4-A

1. That man is Darth Vader.
   That man is wearing a cape.

2. He rules over the planets.
   The planets have been conquered by the Empire.

3. The rebels are led by Luke Skywalker.
   The rebels are fighting the Empire.

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 4-B

1. "Jaws" was a movie.
   The movie was about a giant shark.

   ____

   ____

2. The people were afraid of the shark.
   The people were on the beach.

   ____

   ____

3. Three men tried to catch the shark.
   The men were in a boat.

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 4-C

1. My friend won the spelling contest.
   My friend is Janice.

   ____

   ____

2. Our principal shook Janice's hand.
   Our principal is Mrs. Jackson. (, . . .,)

   ____

   ____

3. Janice won a terrific prize.
   The prize was a trip to Disneyland. (,)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-4 Review

1. The people are fixing the houses.
   ~~The people~~ live in the town. (WHO)
   The houses were burned by the fire.

2. The storm had ended. (WHEN . . .,)
   The animals came out of their hiding places.
   The hiding places were in the forest.
   ~~The animals~~ began to look for food. (AND)

3. Some day space travelers may discover life forms.
   The space travelers will be exploring other planets.
   ~~The life forms~~ are unknown today. (THAT)

4. The woman began to sing in a voice.
The woman was on the stage.
~~The voice~~ was strong and clear. (THAT)

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 5-A

1. Jack puts peanut butter on everything he eats.
   The peanut butter is crunchy.

   ____

   ____

2. He makes peanut-butter salads.
   The salads are giant.

   ____

   ____

3. He even eats peanut-butter soup!
   The peanut-butter soup is hot.

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 5-B

1. A tomato was on television last night.
   The tomato was singing.

   ____

   ____

2. There was also a head of lettuce.
   The head of lettuce was whistling.

   ____

   ____

3. Have you ever seen a vegetable?
   The vegetable is talking.

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 5-C

1. The house stood on a hill.
   The house had been abandoned.

   ____

   ____

2. People said it was a house.
   The house was haunted.

   ____

   ____

3. Shutters hung from the empty windows.
   The shutters were broken.

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 6-A

1. King Kong thought SOMETHING.
   People liked to sit in his hand. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

2. The people didn't know SOMETHING.
   Kong was only trying to be friendly. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

3. They said SOMETHING.
   King Kong was too big to be nice. (THAT)

   ____

   ____

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-5 Review

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, combine these sentences to make a paragraph. Your paragraph should have 7 sentences in it.

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Crispus Attucks was a sailor.
The sailor was Black.
The sailor was American.
~~The sailor~~ lived in Boston in 1770. (WHO)

At that time, soldiers were stationed in Boston.
The soldiers had been sent by the King of England.

Colonists did not want the soldiers in their city.
There were many colonists.
The soldiers were red-coated.

One day Crispus and crowd of colonists marched toward a group of soldiers.
The colonists were angry.
The soldiers were in the town square.
~~Crispus and the colonists~~ shouted at them to go back to England. (AND)

Suddenly, the soldiers began to fire at the colonists.
The soldiers were outnumbered.
The colonists were unarmed.

The shooting had stopped. (WHEN . . .,)
Crispus Attucks lay dead on the ground.

Today there is a monument.
The monument is in Boston.
~~The monument~~ honors Crispus Attucks. (THAT)
Crispus Attucks was an ex-slave. (,)
~~The ex-slave~~ was one of the first Americans to die in the Boston Massacre. (WHO)

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 6-B

1. Liz thinks SOMETHING.
   Soccer is a great sport. (JUST JOIN)

   ____

   ____

2. She knows SOMETHING.
   She will be a famous soccer star someday. (JUST JOIN)

   ____

   ____

3. Liz's friends say SOMETHING.
   She thinks with her feet. (JUST JOIN)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 6-C

1. SOMETHING bothered Teresa.
   The little bird was kept in a cage. (THE FACT THAT)

   ____

   ____

2. SOMETHING made her sad.
   The bird couldn't fly away anymore. (THE FACT THAT)

   ____

   ____

3. SOMETHING didn't make Teresa feel any better.
   The bird had plenty of food and water in the cage. (THE FACT THAT)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 1-6 Review

1. SOMETHING doesn't mean SOMETHING.
   You have running shoes. (THE FACT THAT)
   The running shoes are new.
   You can beat me in a race. (THAT)

2. Isabel says SOMETHING
   She can pass the test. (JUST JOIN)
   The test is in math.
   She doesn't study. (EVEN IF)

3. Mork thinks SOMETHING
   The people have some customs. (THAT)
   ~~The people~~ live on Earth. (WHO)
   The customs are strange.

4. King Kong was bothered by SOMETHING
The planes were shooting at him. (THE FACT THAT)
He climbed up the building. (AS)
The building was tall.

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 7-A

1. SOMETHING is a mystery.
The pirates hid the treasure ~~somewhere~~. (WHERE)

2. We're not even sure of SOMETHING.
They brought the treasure to this island ~~somehow~~. (HOW)

3. And we don't know SOMETHING.
The pirates never came back for their treasure ~~for some reason~~. (WHY)

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 7-B

1. The explorers didn't know SOMETHING.
The cave was ~~so deep~~. (HOW DEEP)

____

____

2. They figured out SOMETHING.
Their ropes were ~~so long~~. (HOW LONG)

____

____

3. Then they knew SOMETHING.
They could go ~~so far~~ into the cave. (HOW FAR)

____

____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 7-C

1. SOMETHING amazed Sharon.
   She could combine sentences so easily. (IT . . . THAT)

   ____

   ____

2. SOMETHING wasn't clear at first.
   She was supposed to put the sentences together somehow.
   (IT . . . HOW)

   ____

   ____

3. Now SOMETHING seems possible.
   She could combine a hundred sentences. (IT . . . THAT)

   ____

   ____

4. And sometimes SOMETHING is really weird!
   The sentences say something. (IT . . . WHAT)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-7 Review

1. SOMETHING is no excuse.
Your dog ate your homework. (THE FACT THAT)
The homework was for math.
The excuse is for staying home from school.

____

____

____

____

2. Sandy was surprised by SOMETHING.
Tracy Austin could play tennis ~~so well~~. (HOW WELL)
She was so young. (, EVEN THOUGH)

____

____

____

3. SOMETHING seems odd.
Darth Vader is such a person. (IT . . . THAT)
The person is well-known.
His face is hidden by a mask. (, BECAUSE)
~~The mask~~ looks like the front of a car. (THAT)
The car is old.

____

____

____

____

____

4. Juanita sat at her desk.
The desk was in science class.
She dreamed SOMETHING.
She was a famous doctor.
The doctor had found a cure for the common cold.

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 8-A

1. Julie enjoys SOMETHING.
   ~~She~~ collects baseball cards. (ING)

   ____

   ____

2. She started SOMETHING last year.
   ~~She~~ saves cards. (ING)

   ____

   ____

3. Now she enjoys SOMETHING.
   ~~She~~ trades them with her friends. (ING)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 8-B

1. SOMETHING is terrible.
   Albert spells. ('S + ING)

____

____

2. He says that SOMETHING is a secret code.
   He writes. (HIS + ING)

____

____

3. But SOMETHING would still make our teacher very happy.
   Albert passes a spelling test. ('S + ING)

____

____

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 8-C

1. The campers were scared by SOMETHING.
   The wolves howled. (ING + OF)

   ____

   ____

2. SOMETHING kept them awake all night.
   The wind moaned. (ING + OF)

   ____

   ____

3. They were glad to see SOMETHING.
   The sun rose. (ING + OF)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-8 Review

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, combine these sentences to make three paragraphs.

THE MISSION OF THE VOYAGER

Paragraph 1

In 1977, a spacecraft was launched from Earth.
The spacecraft was called Voyager.

SOMETHING meant SOMETHING.
Someone launched the Voyager. (THE + ING + OF)
People would soon get a view of Jupiter and Saturn. (THAT)
The view would be close-up.
Jupiter and Saturn are the two largest planets. (,)
The planets are orbiting the sun.

Scientists were excited about SOMETHING.
The spacecraft flies so close to these planets. ('S + ING)
The planets are mysterious.

Paragraph 2

Three years later, Voyager set back some information.
The information was amazing.
The information was about Saturn.

Pictures showed SOMETHING.
The pictures were taken by the spacecraft.
The rings are made up of pieces of ice and rock. (THAT)
The rings are around Saturn.
~~The pieces of ice and rock~~ whirl about the planet at speeds. (THAT)
The speeds are great.

Other instruments measured a wind.
The wind was on the planet's surface.
~~The wind~~ blew at 900 miles an hour! (THAT)

Paragraph 3

Voyager completes its mission. (AFTER . . .,)
It will fly away from Saturn.
~~It will~~ travel on to stars. (AND)
The stars are distant.

SOMETHING is possible.
The spacecraft might meet beings. (IT . . . THAT)
The beings are intelligent.
The beings are on other worlds.

Scientists have put a record on board Voyager.
Our neighbors will know SOMETHING. (SO THAT)
Our neighbors are in space.
The spacecraft came from some~~whe~~re. (WHERE)

The record contains greetings.
The greetings are in Earth languages.
There are many different Earth languages.

Beings play the record. (IF . . .,)
The beings are on other planets.
Maybe they will send a message.
The message will go back to Earth.

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 9-A

1. Ken likes SOMETHING.
   ~~He~~ makes people laugh. (TO)

2. SOMETHING is his dream.
   ~~He~~ becomes a famous comedian. (TO)

3. That's why he always wants SOMETHING.
   ~~He~~ clowns around in class. (TO)

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 9-B

1. Do you want to learn SOMETHING?
   Y~~ou~~ make friends with an octopus som~~eh~~ow. (HOW TO)

2. First you have to figure out SOMETHING.
   Y~~ou~~ find a friendly octopus some~~wh~~ere. (WHERE TO)

3. You also have to know SOMETHING.
   Y~~ou~~ stop shaking hands with him som~~eti~~me. (WHEN TO)

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 9-C

1. SOMETHING is not impossible.
   Monkeys learn sign language. (FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

2. Monkeys can wiggle their fingers as a sign (for) SOMETHING.
   Someone tickles them. (FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

3. Someday scientists hope (for) SOMETHING.
   People and animals talk. (FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 9-D

1. SOMETHING is important.
   Dracula sleeps during the day. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

2. But SOMETHING was difficult.
   He gets his rest. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

3. SOMETHING was not very nice.
   Someone put a sunlamp in his bedroom. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-9 Review

1. SOMETHING would be exciting.
We travel to planets. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)
The planets are far-away.
Humans have never visited ~~the~~ ~~planets~~ before. (THAT)

____

____

____

____

2. SOMETHING amazed the doctors.
A man changed into the Hulk.
The man was ordinary.
The Hulk was incredible.

____

____

____

____

3. Peter thinks SOMETHING.
He can learn to dance.
He watches "Dance Fever" every night.
"Dance Fever" is on television.

____

____

____

____

4. SOMETHING would be terrific.
Josefina wins first prize.
The prize is given in the speech contest.

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 10-A

1. Gloria swung.
   She swung at the ball.
   She swung with all her might.

   ____

   ____

   ____

2. Fran ran back.
   She ran to the left-field wall.

   ____

   ____

3. She leaped.
   She leaped in the air.
   S~~he~~ caught the ball. (AND)
   She caught it with one hand.

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 10-B

1. Pablo sat in the theater.
   He was wishing he hadn't come to the scary movie. (,)

   ____

   ____

2. He was squirming in his seat. (. . .,)
   He tried not to watch the screen.

   ____

   ____

3. He closed his eyes.
   He was hoping the movie would end soon. (,)

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 10-C

1. Frodo clutched the ring in his hand.
   Frodo was caught in its evil spell. (,)

2. He turned quickly.
   He was startled by a noise behind him. (,)

3. Gollum was hidden behind a rock. (. . .,)
   Gollum waited to attack.

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-10 Review

1. The captain was confused by the signals.
   The signals were coming from the planet below. (. . .,)
   The captain told Mr. Spock SOMETHING.
   Mr. Spock beams down. (TO)
   Mr. Spock finds out SOMETHING. (AND)
   The music was coming from somewhere. (WHERE)
   The music was disco.

2. The mayor stood.
   She was on the stage.
   She was smiling at the crowd. (,)
   She was waving to the cameras. (,)
   She was hoping SOMETHING. (, AND)
   Everyone would vote for her. (THAT)

3. Ali said SOMETHING.
He could float.
He floated like a butterfly.
He could sting.
He stung like a bee.

4. The Super Bowl is a game.
The game is important.
The game is matching the teams.
The teams are the two best.
The teams are in pro football.

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 11-A

1. Gandalf stood before the elves.
   His long beard was blowing in the breeze. (,)

   ____

   ____

2. The elves gathered around him.
   Their heads were down. (,)
   Their spirits were broken. (AND)

   ____

   ____

   ____

3. The evil lord's soldiers prepared to attack.
   Their horses were breathing fire. (,)
   Their swords were glistening in the moonlight. (AND)

   ____

   ____

   ____

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 11-B

1. Yesterday we learned all about comets.
   ~~Comets~~ are made up of frozen gases and dust. (, WHICH)

2. Comets have long tails.
   ~~The tails~~ can stretch across space for millions of miles. (, WHICH)

3. One comet is named after Edmund Halley.
   ~~Edmund Halley~~ dicovered that the comet appeared in the sky every 77 years. (, WHO)

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lesson 11-C

1. Rose was happy to reach the top of the mountain. (. . .,)
Rose stopped to rest.

____

____

2. She looked down at the valley.
The valley was so green and peaceful. (,)

____

____

3. Overhead a hawk circled.
The hawk was wild and free above the peaks. (,)

____

____

Name: ____________________

Date: ____________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Lessons 1-11 Review

1. Monica walked on.
   She walked through the darkness.
   The darkness was freezing.
   Her hands were jammed into her pockets. (,)
   Her eyes were fixed on the path ahead.
   She thought of SOMETHING. (AS)
   She would say some~~thi~~ng. (WHAT)
   She got home. (WHEN)

2. Alice ran.
   A~~lic~~e is the best roller-skater on our block. (, WHO . . .,)
   Alice ran to the top of the hill.
   A~~lic~~e put on her skates. (,)
   The skates were new.
   A~~lic~~e then took off for the bottom. (, AND)
   Her hair was flying. (,)
   Her hair is long.
   It flew straight out behind her.

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

3. David was curious about the noise. (. . .,)
The noise was in the attic.
David opened the door.
~~David~~ discovered SOMETHING. (AND)
A bird had flown in the window. (THAT)
The bird was little.
The window was broken.
He had forgotten to fix ~~the~~ ~~window~~. (, WHICH)

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

SENTENCE COMBINING

Final Review

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, combine these sentences to make three paragraphs.

MOSQUITOES

Paragraph 1

Mosquitoes are insects.
The insects are tiny.
The insects are flying.
The insects can spread many diseases.
The diseases are spread among animals and humans.

Most mosquitoes live in areas.
The areas are warm.
They can also be found near the North Pole.

Paragraph 2

Mosquitoes feed on the blood.
The mosquitoes are female.
The blood is of other creatures.
The creatures include humans.

Did you know SOMETHING?
Mosquitoes can't really bite.

They actually poke through the skin of their victims.
They do this with a kind of tongue.
The tongue is sharp.

The tongue is hollow.
The tongue is like a straw.
The mosquito can suck blood through it.

Liquid causes the swelling.
The liquid is on the mosquito's tongue.
The swelling appears on the skin.

Paragraph 3 Mosquitoes usually lay their eggs.
The eggs are laid in pools of water.

People try SOMETHING by SOMETHING.
People control mosquiteos.
People spread oil.
They spread it over the surface of the water.
The eggs won't hatch.

Sprays are used (for) SOMETHING.
The sprays kill the mosquitoes.
The mosquitoes are adult.

Mosquitoes are not kept under control.
They can spread diseases.
The diseases are deadly.
The diseases are like yellow fever.
The diseases are like sleeping sickness.

SENTENCE-COMBINING LESSONS

Teacher's Edition

Prepared by Joe Lawlor

Center for the Study of Writing Instruction

SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(213) 598-7661

Lesson 1: Coordination within Sentences[*]

A. coordinate predicate phrases

1. Ana hit the ball.
~~Ana~~ sent it soaring. (AND)

Ana hit the ball and sent it soaring.

2. Tom fell to the ground.
~~Tom~~ ripped his uniform. (AND)

Tom fell to the ground and ripped his uniform.

3. María reached with her glove.
~~María~~ caught the ball. (AND)

María reached with her glove and caught the ball.

B. coordinate direct objects and predicate nominatives

1. Pat ordered a hamburger.
~~Pat~~ ~~ordered~~ a coke. (AND)

Pat ordered a hamburger and a coke.

2. Juan had a hot dog.
~~Juan~~ ~~had~~ a milk shake. (AND)

Juan had a hot dog and a milk shake.

3. Juan is Pat's friend.
~~Juan~~ ~~is~~ ~~Pat's~~ neighbor. (AND)

Juan is Pat's friend and neighbor.

C. coordinate adverbs and predicate adjectives

1. Elena spoke clearly.
~~Elena~~ ~~spoke~~ calmly. (AND)

Elena spoke clearly and calmly.

2. Her speech was short.
~~Her~~ ~~speech~~ ~~was~~ interesting. (AND)

Her speech was short and interesting.

3. Elena always seems relaxed.
~~Elena~~ ~~always~~ ~~seems~~ happy. (AND)

Elena always seems relaxed and happy.

---

[*] The grammatical terms used here are for teachers' information only. The terms should not be used with students.

D. review of lesson 1

1. Magic leaped in the air.
   ~~Magic~~ caught the ball. (,)
   ~~Magic~~ slammed it through the basket. (, AND)

   Magic leaped in the air, caught the ball, and slammed it through the basket.

2. Kareem had 29 points.
   ~~Kareem had~~ 12 rebounds. (,)
   ~~Kareem had~~ 4 blocked shots. (, AND)

   Kareem had 29 points, 12 rebounds, and 4 blocked shots.

3. The crowd cheered happily.
   ~~The crowd cheered~~ noisily. (AND)

   The crowd cheered happily and noisily.

4. (no signals)
   Magic is a good shooter.
   Magic is an excellent rebounder.
   Magic is a great ball handler.

   Magic is a good shooter, an excellent rebounder, and a great ball handler.[*]

---

[*] Although only one solution is shown here for the unsignaled exercise, other responses are certainly possible. Students should be encouraged to experiment with a variety of sentence-combining strategies in the unsignaled problems. Comparison of several different student responses can stimulate profitable class discussion. Students may be asked to choose their "favorite" solution and to explain why their choice "sounds better" than others. The criteria for judging the acceptability of a response should be that (1) the sentence is grammatical and (2) the combined sentence contains all the information from the inserted sentences.

Lesson 2: Movable Adverbial Clauses

A. time clauses in final position

1. Judy watched television.
   She had finished her homework. (AFTER)

   Judy watched television after she had finished her homework.

2. She went to bed.
   "Mork and Mindy" was over. (WHEN)

   She went to bed when "Mork and Mindy" was over.

3. She dreamed about egg-shaped space ships.
   She slept. (WHILE)

   She dreamed about egg-shaped space ships while she slept.

B. other adverbial clauses in final position

1. Isabel always watches the Rams play.
   They are her favorite team. (BECAUSE)

   Isabel always watches the Rams play because they are her favorite team.

2. She claps and cheers.
   The Rams score a touchdown. (IF)

   She claps and cheers if the Rams score a touchdown.

3. She thinks the Rams will win the Super Bowl next year.
   They have so many good players. (SINCE)

   She thinks the Rams will win the Super Bowl next year since they have so many good players.

C. adverbial clauses in initial position

1. I bought my roller skates. (BEFORE. . . ,)
   I had to walk everywhere.

   Before I bought my roller skates, I had to walk everywhere.

2. I first got my skates. (WHEN. . . ,)
   I couldn't skate very well.

   When I first got my skates, I couldn't skate very well.

3. You know what you're doing. (UNLESS. . . ,)
   You shouldn't try roller-skating tricks.

   Unless you know what you're doing, you shouldn't try roller-skating tricks.

D. review of lessons 1 and 2

1. Dave overslept this morning. (SINCE. . .,)
   He missed the bus.
   ~~He~~ had to walk to school. (AND)

   Since Dave overslept this morning, he missed the bus and had to walk to school.

2. The game was over. (WHEN. . .,)
   The players hugged the coach.
   ~~The~~ ~~players~~ lifted him up on their shoulders. (,)
   ~~The~~ ~~players~~ carried him from the field. (, AND)

   When the game was over, the players hugged the coach, lifted him up on their shoulders, and carried him from the field.

3. (no signals)
   Luke dived toward the planet.
   Luke fired the rocket.
   Luke escaped.
   The Empire fighters could catch him.

   Luke dived toward the planet, fired the rocket, and escaped before the Empire fighters could catch him.

Lesson 3: Relative Clauses

A. who and that clauses modifying objects; the subject of the second sentence is changed into a relative pronoun

1. Lisa caught a trout.
   The trout weighed seven pounds. (THAT)

   Lisa caught a trout that weighed seven pounds.

2. She showed the trout to the woman.
   The woman owned the bait shop. (WHO)

   She showed the trout to the woman who owned the bait shop.

3. She gave Lisa a prize.
   The prize said "Biggest Fish of the Day." (THAT)

   She gave Lisa a prize that said "Biggest Fish of the Day."

B. who and that clauses modifying subjects; the subject of the second sentence is changed into a relative pronoun

1. The team will be the state champion.
   The team wins this game. (THAT)

   The team that wins this game will be the state champion.

2. The fans will see an exciting contest.
   The fans come to the game. (WHO)

   The fans who come to the game will see an exciting contest.

3. The player will get an award.
   The player scores the most points. (WHO)

   The player who scores the most points will get an award.

C. that and deleted-pronoun clauses modifying subjects and objects; an object of the second sentence is changed into a relative pronoun or is deleted

1. Tom and José went to the theater.
   José's mother owns the theater. (THAT)

   Tom and José went to the theater that Jose's mother owns.

2. The movie was funny.
   They saw the movie. (JUST JOIN)

   The movie they saw was funny.

3. They ate all the popcorn.
   José's mother gave them the popcorn. (THAT)

   They ate all the popcorn that José's mother gave them.

D. review of lessons 1-3

1. Our team won the game (AFTER. . .,)
The fans ran up to the players.
The fans had waited near the end zone. (WHO)

After our team won the game, the fans who had waited near the end zone ran up to the players.

2. Lisa was very hungry. (SINCE. . . ,)
She cooked the trout.
~~She cooked~~ the catfish. (AND)
She had caught the trout and the catfish. (THAT)

Since Lisa was very hungry, she cooked the trout and the catfish that she had caught.

3. (no signals)
Some of these problems are hard.
We are doing these problems.
They don't have any signals.
The signals tell you how to combine the sentences.

Some of these problems (that) we are doing are hard because they don't have any signals that tell you how to combine the sentences.

Lesson 4: Phrasal Modifiers Following Nouns

A. present and past participle phrases

1. That man is Darth Vader.
   That man is wearing a cape.

   That man wearing a cape is Darth Vader.

2. He rules over the planets.
   The planets have been conquered by the Empire.

   He rules over the planets conquered by the Empire.

3. The rebels are led by Luke Skywalker.
   The rebels are fighting the Empire.

   The rebels fighting the Empire are led by Luke Skywalker.

B. prepositional phrases

1. "Jaws" was a movie.
   The movie was about a giant shark.

   "Jaws" was movie about a giant shark.

2. The people were afraid of the shark.
   The people were on the beach.

   The people on the beach were afraid of the shark.

3. Three men tried to catch the shark.
   The men were in a boat.

   Three men in a boat tried to catch the shark.

C. appositives

1. My friend won the spelling contest.
   My friend is Janice.

   My friend Janice won the spelling contest.

2. Our principal shook Janice's hand.
   Our principal is Mrs. Jackson. (, . . . ,)

   Our principal, Mrs. Jackson, shook Janice's hand.

3. Janice won a terrific prize.
   The prize was a trip to Disneyland. (,)

   Janice won a terrific prize, a trip to Disneyland.

D. review of lessons 1-4

1. The people are fixing the houses.
The people live in the town. (WHO)
The houses were burned by the fire.

The people who live in the town are fixing the houses burned by the fire.

2. The storm had ended. (WHEN. . . ,)
The animals came out of their hiding places.
The hiding places were in the forest.
~~The animals~~ began to look for food. (AND)

When the storm had ended, the animals came out of their hiding places in the forest and began to look for food.

3. Some day space travelers may discover life forms.
The space travelers will be exploring other planets.
The life forms are unknown today. (THAT)

Some day space travelers exploring other planets may discover life forms that are unknown today.

4. The woman began to sing in a voice.
The woman was on the stage.
The voice was strong and clear. (THAT)

The woman on the stage began to sing in a voice that was strong and clear.

Lesson 5: Single-word Modifiers Preceding Nouns

A. simple adjectives

1. Jack puts peanut butter on everything he eats.
   The peanut butter is crunchy.

   Jack puts crunchy peanut butter on everything he eats.

2. He makes peanut-butter salads.
   The salads are giant.

   He makes giant peanut-butter salads.

3. He even eats peanut-butter soup!
   The soup is hot.

   He even eats hot peanut-butter soup!

B. present participles

1. A tomato was on television last night.
   The tomato was singing.

   A singing tomato was on television last night.

2. There was also a head of lettuce.
   The head of lettuce was whistling.

   There was also a whistling head of lettuce.

3. Have you ever seen a vegetable?
   The vegetable is talking.

   Have you ever seen a talking vegetable?

C. past participles

1. The house stood on a hill.
   The house had been abandoned.

   The abandoned house stood on a hill.

2. People said it was a house.
   The house was haunted.

   People said it was a haunted house.

3. Shutters hung from the empty windows.
   The shutters were broken.

   Broken shutters hung from the empty windows.

D. review of lessons 1-5

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Crispus Attucks was a sailor.
The sailor was Black.
The sailor was American.
The sailor lived in Boston in 1770. (WHO)

At that time, soldiers were stationed in Boston.
The soldiers had been sent by the King of England.

Colonists did not want the soldiers in their city.
There were many colonists.
The soldiers were red-coated.

One day Crispus and crowd of colonists marched toward a group of soldiers.
The colonists were angry.
The soldiers were in the town square.
~~Crispus and the colonists~~ shouted at them to go back to England. (AND)

Suddenly, the soldiers began to fire at the colonists.
The soldiers were outnumbered.
~~The soldiers were~~ frightened. (AND)
The colonists were unarmed.

The shooting had stopped. (WHEN. . .,)
Crispus Attucks lay dead on the ground.

Today there is a monument.
The monument is in Boston.
The monument honors Crispus Attucks. (THAT)
Crispus Attucks was an ex-slave. (,)
The ex-slave was one of the first Americans to die in the Boston Massacre. (WHO)

Crispus Attucks was a Black American sailor who lived in Boston in 1770. At that time, soldiers sent by the King of England were stationed in Boston. Many colonists did not want the red-coated soldiers in their city. One day Crispus and a crowd of angry colonists marched toward a group of soldiers in the town square and shouted at them to go back to England. Suddenly, the outnumbered and frighted soldiers began to fire at the unarmed colonists. When the shooting had stopped, Crispus Attucks lay dead on the ground. Today there is a monument in Boston that honors Crispus Attucks, an ex-slave who was one of the first Americans to die in the Boston Massacre.

Lesson 6: Factive Noun Clauses

A. that clauses as objects

1. King Kong thought SOMETHING.
People liked to sit in his hand. (THAT)

King Kong thought that people liked to sit in his hand.

2. The people didn't know SOMETHING.
Kong was only trying to be friendly. (THAT)

The people didn't know that Kong was only trying to be friendly.

3. They said SOMETHING.
King Kong was too big to be nice. (THAT)

They said that King Kong was too big to be nice.

B. deleted-that clauses as objects

1. Liz thinks SOMETHING.
Soccer is a great sport. (JUST JOIN)

Liz thinks soccer is a great sport.

2. She knows SOMETHING.
She will be a famous soccer star someday. (JUST JOIN)

She knows she will be a famous soccer star someday.

3. Liz's friends say SOMETHING.
She thinks with her feet. (JUST JOIN)

Liz's friends say she thinks with her feet.

C. the fact that clauses as subjects

1. SOMETHING bothered Teresa.
The little bird was kept in a cage. (THE FACT THAT)

The fact that the little bird was kept in a cage bothered Teresa.

2. SOMETHING made her sad.
The bird couldn't fly away anymore. (THE FACT THAT)

The fact that the bird couldn't fly away anymore made her sad.

3. SOMETHING didn't make Teresa feel any better.
The bird had plenty of food and water in the cage. (THE FACT THAT)

The fact that the bird had plenty of food and water in the cage didn't make Teresa feel any better.

D. review of lessons 1-6

1. SOMETHING doesn't mean SOMETHING.
You have running shoes. (THE FACT THAT)
The running shoes are new.
You can beat me in a race. (THAT)

The fact that you have new running shoes doesn't mean that you can beat me in a race.

2. Isabel says SOMETHING.
She can pass the test. (JUST JOIN)
The test is in math.
She doesn't study. (EVEN IF)

Isabel says she can pass the math test even if she doesn't study.

3. Mork thinks SOMETHING.
The people have some customs. (THAT)
The people live on Earth. (WHO)
The customs are strange.

Mork thinks that the people who live on earth have some strange customs.

4. King Kong was bothered by SOMETHING.
The planes were shooting at him. (THE FACT THAT)
He climbed up the building. (AS)
The building was tall.

King Kong was bothered by the fact that the planes were shooting at him as he climbed up the tall building.

Lesson 7: Question Clauses as Nouns; Sentences Using "It" as the Subject

A. wh word clauses

1. SOMETHING is a mystery.
   The pirates hid the treasure ~~some~~where. (WHERE)

   Where the pirates hid the treasure is a mystery.

2. We're not even sure of SOMETHING.
   They brought the treasure to this island ~~some~~how. (HOW)

   We're not even sure of how they brought the treasure to this island.

3. And we don't know SOMETHING.
   The pirates never came back for their treasure ~~for some reason~~. (WHY)

   And we don't know why the pirates never came back for their treasure.

B. how + adjective/adverb clauses

1. The explorers didn't know SOMETHING.
   The cave was ~~so deep~~. (HOW DEEP)

   The explorers didn't know how deep the cave was.

2. They figured out SOMETHING.
   Their ropes were ~~so long~~. (HOW LONG)

   They figured out how long their ropes were.

3. Then they knew SOMETHING.
   They could go ~~so far~~ into the cave. (HOW FAR)

   Then they knew how far they could go into the cave.

c. sentences with it as the subject

1. SOMETHING amazed Sharon.
   She could combine sentences so easily. (IT . . . THAT)

   It amazed Sharon that she could combine sentences so easily.

2. SOMETHING wasn't clear at first.
   She was supposed to put the sentences together ~~some~~how.
   (IT . . . HOW)

   It wasn't clear at first how she was supposed to put the sentences together.

3. Now SOMETHING seems possible.
She could combine a hundred sentences. (IT . . . THAT)

Now it seems possible that she could combine a hundred sentences.

4. And sometimes SOMETHING is really weird!
The sentences say ~~something~~. (IT . . . WHAT)

And sometimes it is really weird what the sentences say!

D. review of lessons 1-7

1. SOMETHING is no excuse.
Your dog ate your homework. (THE FACT THAT)
The homework was for math.
The excuse is for staying home from school.

The fact that your dog ate your math homework is no excuse for staying home from school.

2. Sandy was surprised by SOMETHING.
Tracy Austin could play tennis ~~so well~~. (HOW WELL)
She was so young. (, EVEN THOUGH)

Sandy was surprised by how well Tracy Austin could play tennis, even though she was so young.

3. SOMETHING seems odd.
Darth Vader is such a person. (IT . . . THAT)
The person is well-known.
His face is hidden by a mask. (, BECAUSE)
The mask looks like the front of a car. (THAT)
The car is old.

It seems odd that Darth Vader is such a well-known person, because his face is hidden by a mask that looks like the front of an old car.

4. (no signals)
Juanita sat at her desk.
The desk was in science class.
She dreamed SOMETHING.
She was a famous doctor.
The doctor had found a cure for the common cold.

As Juanita sat at her desk in science class, she dreamed that she was a famous doctor who had found a cure for the common cold.

Lesson 8: Gerunds as Nouns

A. -ing phrases

1. Julie enjoys SOMETHING.
~~She~~ collects baseball cards. (ING)

Julie enjoys collecting baseball cards.

2. She started SOMETHING last year.
~~She~~ saves cards. (ING)

She started saving cards last year.

3. Now she enjoys SOMETHING.
~~She~~ trades them with her firends. (ING)

Now she enjoys trading them with her friends.

B. possessive + -ing

1. SOMETHING is terrible.
Albert spells. ('S + ING)

Albert's spelling is terrible.

2. He says that SOMETHING is a secret code.
He writes. (HIS + ING)

He says that his writing is a secret code.

3. But SOMETHING would still make our teacher very happy.
Albert passes a spelling test. ('S + ING)

But Albert's passing a spelling test would still make our teacher very happy.

C. -ing + of

1. The campers were scared by SOMETHING.
The wolves howled. (ING + OF)

The campers were scared by the howling of the wolves.

2. SOMETHING kept them awake all night.
The wind moaned in the trees. (ING + OF)

The moaning of the wind in the trees kept them awake all night.

3. They were glad to see SOMETHING.
The sun rose. (ING + OF)

They were glad to see the rising of the sun.

D. review of lessons 1-8

THE MISSION OF VOYAGER II

In 1977, a spacecraft was launched from Earth.
The spacecraft was called Voyager II.

SOMETHING meant SOMETHING.
~~Someone~~ launched the Voyager. (THE + ING + OF)
People would soon get a view of Jupiter and Saturn. (THAT)
The view would be close-up.
Jupiter and Saturn are the two largest planets. (,)
The planets are orbiting the sun.

Scientists were excited about SOMETHING.
The spacecraft flies so close to these planets. ('S + ING)
The planets are mysterious.

Three years later, Voyager II sent back some information.
The information was amazing.
The information was about Saturn.

Pictures showed SOMETHING.
The pictures were taken by the spacecraft.
The rings are made up of pieces of ice and rock. (THAT)
The rings are around Saturn.
The pieces of ice and rock whirl about the planet at speeds. (THAT)
The speeds are great.

Other instruments measured a wind.
The wind was on the planet's surface.
The wind blew at 900 miles an hour! (THAT)

Voyager II completes its mission. (AFTER . . .,)
It will fly away from Saturn.
~~It will~~ travel on to stars. (AND)
The stars are distant.

SOMETHING is possible.
The spacecraft might meet beings. (IT . . . THAT)
The beings are intelligent.
The beings are on other worlds.

Scientists have put a record on board Voyager II.
Our neighbors will know SOMETHING. (SO THAT)
Our neighbors are in space.
The spacecraft came from ~~somewhere~~. (WHERE)

The record contains greetings.
The greetings are in Earth languages.
There are many different Earth languages.

Beings play the record. (IF . . .,)
The beings are on other planets.
Maybe they will send a message.
The message will go back to Earth.

In 1977, a spacecraft called Voyager II was launched from Earth. The launching of the Voyager meant that people would soon get a close-up view of Jupiter and Saturn, the two largest planets orbiting the sun. Scientists were excited about the spacecraft's flying so close to these mysterious planets.

Three years later, Voyager II sent back some amazing information about Saturn. Pictures taken by the spacecraft showed that the rings around Saturn are made up of pieces of ice and rock that whirl about the planet at great speeds. Other instruments measured a wind on the planet's surface that blew at 900 miles an hour!

After Voyager II completes its mission, it will fly away from the sun and travel on to distant stars. It is possible that the spacecraft might meet intelligent beings on other worlds. Scientists have put a record on board Voyager II so that our neighbors in space will know where the spacecraft came from. The record contains greetings in many different Earth languages. If beings on other planets play the record, maybe they will send a message back to Earth.

Lesson 9: Infinitives as Nouns

A. infinitive phrases

1. Ken likes SOMETHING.
   ~~He~~ makes people laugh. (TO)

   Ken likes to make people laugh.

2. SOMETHING is his dream.
   ~~He~~ becomes a famous comedian. (TO)

   To become a famous comedian is his dream.

3. That's why he always wants SOMETHING.
   ~~He~~ clowns around in class. (TO)

   That's why he always wants to clown around in class.

B. wh word + infinitive

1. Do you want to learn SOMETHING?
   ~~You~~ make friends with an octopus ~~somehow~~. (HOW TO)

   Do you want to learn how to make friends with an octopus?

2. First you have to figure out SOMETHING.
   ~~You~~ find a friendly octopus ~~somewhere~~. (WHERE TO)

   First you have to figure out where to find a friendly octopus.

3. You also have to know SOMETHING
   ~~You~~ stop shaking hands with him ~~sometime~~. (WHEN TO)

   You also have to know when to stop shaking hands with him.

C. for + infinitive

1. SOMETHING is not impossible.
   Monkeys learn sign language. (FOR . . . TO)

   For monkeys to learn sign language is not impossible.

2. Monkeys can wiggle their fingers as a sign (for) SOMETHING.
   Someone tickles them. (FOR . . . TO)

   Monkeys can wiggle their fingers as a sign for someone to tickle them.

3. Someday scientists hope (for) SOMETHING.
   People and animals talk. (FOR . . .TO)

   Someday scientists hope for people and animals to talk.

D. infinitives with it as the subject

1. SOMETHING is important.
   Dracula sleeps during the day. (IT . . . FOR . . .TO)

   It is important for Dracula to sleep during the day.

2. But SOMETHING was difficult.
   He gets his rest. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

   But it was difficult for him to get his rest.

3. SOMETHING was not very nice.
   Someone put a sunlamp in his bedroom. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)

   It was not very nice for someone to put a sunlamp in his bedroom.

E. review of lessons 1-9

1. SOMETHING would be exciting.
   We travel to planets. (IT . . . FOR . . . TO)
   The planets are far-away.
   Humans have never visited the planets before. (THAT)

   It would be exciting for us to visit far-away planets that humans have never visited before.

2. (no signals)
   SOMETHING amazed the doctors.
   A man changed into the Hulk.
   The man was ordinary.
   The Hulk was incredible.

   It amazed the doctors that an ordinary man changed into the Incredible Hulk.

   For an ordinary man to change into the Incredible Hulk amazed the doctors.

3. (no signals)
   Peter thinks SOMETHING.
   He can learn to dance.
   He watches "Dance Fever" every night.
   "Dance Fever" is on television.

   Peter thinks (that) he can learn to dance if he watches "Dance Fever" on television every night.

   Peter thinks (that) he can learn to dance by watching "Dance Fever" every night on television.

4. **SOMETHING** would be terrific.
Josefina wins first prize.
The prize is given in the speech contest.

It would be terrific for Josefina to win first prize in the speech contest.

For Josefina to win first prize in the speech contest would be terrific.

Lesson 10: Adverbial Phrases

A. prepositional phrases

1. Gloria swung.
   She swung at the ball.
   She swung with all her might.

   Gloria swung at the ball with all her might.

2. Fran ran back.
   She ran to the left-field wall.

   Fran ran back to the left-field wall.

3. She leaped.
   She leaped in the air.
   ~~She~~ caught the ball. (AND)
   She caught it with one hand.

   She leaped in the air and caught the ball with one hand.

B. present participle phrases

1. Pablo sat in the theater.
   He was wishing he hadn't come to the scary movie. (,)

   Pablo sat in theater, wishing he hadn't come to the scary movie.

2. He was squirming in his seat. (. . . ,)
   He tried not to watch the screen.

   Squirming in his seat, he tried not to watch the screen.

3. He closed his eyes.
   He was hoping the movie would end soon. (,)

   He closed his eyes, hoping the movie would end soon.

C. past participle phrases

1. Frodo clutched the ring in his hand.
   Frodo was caught in its evil spell. (,)

   Frodo clutched the ring in his hand, caught in its evil spell.

2. He turned quickly.
   He was startled by a noise behind him. (,)

   He turned quickly, startled by a noise behind him.

3. Gollum was hidden behind a rock. (. . . ,)
   Gollum waited to attack.

   Hidden behind a rock, Gollum waited to attack.

D. review of lessons 1-10:

1. The captain was confused by the signals.
The signals were coming from the planet below. (. . . ,)
The captain told Mr. Spock SOMETHING.
~~Mr. Spock~~ beams down. (TO)
~~Mr. Spock~~ finds out SOMETHING. (AND)
The music was coming from ~~somewhere~~. (WHERE)
The music was disco.

Confused by the signals coming from the planet below, the captain told Mr. Spock to beam down and find out where the disco music was coming from.

2. The mayor stood.
She was on the stage.
She was smiling at the crowd. (,)
She was waving to the cameras. (,)
She was hoping SOMETHING. (, AND)
Everyone would vote for her. (THAT)

The mayor stood on the stage, smiling at the crowd, waving to the cameras, and hoping that everyone would vote for her.

3. Ali said SOMETHING.
He could float.
He floated like a butterfly.
He could sting.
He stung like a bee.

Ali said (that) he could float like a butterfly and sting like a bee.

4. The Super Bowl is a game.
The game is important.
The game is matching the teams.
The teams are the two best.
The teams are in pro football.

The Super Bowl is an important game, matching the two best teams in pro football.

Lesson 11: Free Modifiers

A. nominative absolutes

1. Gandolf stood before the elves.
His long beard was blowing in the breeze. (,)

Gandlof stood before the elves, his long beard blowing in the breeze.

2. The elves gathered around him.
Their heads were down. (,)
Their spirits were broken. (AND)

The elves gathered around him, their heads down and their spirits broken.

3. The evil lord's soldiers prepared to attack.
Their horses were breathing fire. (,)
Their swords were glistening in the moonlight. (AND)

The evil lord's soldiers prepared to attack, their horses breathing fire and their swords glistening in the moonlight.

B. non-restrictive relative clauses

1. Yesterday we learned all about comets.
Comets are made up of frozen gases and dust. (, WHICH)

Yesterday we learned all about comets, which are made up of frozen gases and dust.

2. Comets have long tails.
The tails can stretch across space for millions of miles.
(, WHICH)

Comets have long tails, which can stretch across space for millions of miles.

3. One comet is named after Edmund Halley.
Edmund Halley discovered that the comet appeared in the sky every 77 years. (, WHO)

One comet is named after Edmund Halley, who discovered that the comet appeared in the sky every 77 years.

C. adjective clusters

1. Rose was happy to reach the top of the mountain. (. . . ,)
Rose stopped to rest.

Happy to reach the top of the mountain, Rose stopped to rest.

2. She looked down at the valley.
The valley was so green and peaceful. (,)

She looked down at the valley, so green and peaceful.

3. Overhead a hawk circled.
The hawk was wild and free above the peaks. (,)

Overhead a hawk circled, wild and free above the peaks.

D. review of lessons 1-11

1. Monica walked on.
She walked through the darkness.
The darkness was freezing.
Her hands were jammed into her pockets. (,)
Her eyes were fixed on the path ahead. (,)
She thought of SOMETHING. (AS)
She would say ~~something~~. (WHAT)
She got home. (WHEN)

Monica walked on through the freezing darkness, her hands jammed into her pockets, her eyes fixed on the path ahead as she thought of what she would say when she got home.

2. Alice ran.
Alice is the best roller-skater on our block. (, WHO. . .,)
Alice ran to the top of the hill.
~~Alice~~ put on her skates. (,)
The skates were new.
~~Alice~~ then took off for the bottom. (, AND)
Her hair was flying. (,)
Her hair is long.
It flew straight out behind her.

Alice, who is the best roller-skater on our block, ran to the top of the hill, put on her new skates, and then took off for the bottom, her long hair flying straight out behind her.

3. David was curious about the noise. (. . . ,)
The noise was in the attic.
David opened the door.
~~David~~ discovered SOMETHING. (AND)
A bird had flown in the window. (THAT)
The bird was little.
The window was broken.
He had forgotten to fix the window. (, WHICH)

Curious about the noise in the attic, David opened the door and discovered that a little bird had flown in the broken window, which he had forgotten to fix.

E. final review (no signals)

MOSQUITOES

Mosquitoes are insects.
The insects are tiny.
The insects are flying.
The insects can spread many diseases.
The diseases are spread among animals and humans.

Most mosquitoes live in areas.
The areas are warm.
They can also be found near the North Pole.

Mosquitoes feed on the blood.
The mosquitoes are female.
The blood is of other creatures.
The creatures include humans.

Did you know SOMETHING?
Mosquitoes can't really bite.

They actually poke through the skin of their victims.
They do this with a kind of tongue.
The tongue is sharp.

The tongue is hollow.
The tongue is like a straw.
The mosquito can suck blood through it.

Liquid causes the swelling.
The liquid is on the mosquito's tongue.
The swelling appears on the skin.

Mosquitoes usually lay their eggs.
The eggs are laid in pools of water.

People try SOMETHING by SOMETHING.
People control mosquitoes.
People spread oil.
They spread it over the surface of the water.
The eggs won't hatch.

Sprays are used (for) SOMETHING.
The sprays kill the mosquitoes.
The mosquitoes are adult.

Mosquitoes are not kept under control.
They can spread diseases.
The diseases are deadly.
The diseases are like yellow fever.
The diseases are like sleeping sickness.

Mosquitoes are tiny flying insects that can spread many diseases among animals and humans. Although most mosquitoes live in warm areas, they can also be found near the North Pole.

Female mosquitoes feed on the blood of other creatures, including humans. Did you know that mosquitoes can't really bite? They actually poke through the skin of their victims with a kind of sharp tongue. The tongue is hollow like a straw, so that the mosquito can suck blood through it. Liquid on the mosquito's tongue causes the swelling that appears on the skin.

Mosquitoes usually lay their eggs in pools of water. People try to control mosquitoes by spreading oil over the surface of the water so the eggs won't hatch. Sprays are used to kill the adult mosquitoes. If mosquitoes are not kept under control, they can spread deadly diseases like yellow fever and sleeping sickness.

SENTENCE-COMBINING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please check below whether or not you used each sentence-combining lesson. If you did use a lesson, we would appreciate your noting the strengths and difficulties that you encountered. Your comments are extremely valuable to our work with sentence-combining instruction.

	Used	Not Used	Strengths	Difficulties
Lesson 1:				
Lesson 2:				
Lesson 3:				
Lesson 4:				
Lesson 5:				
Lesson 6:				

	Used	Not Used	Strengths	Difficulties
Lesson 7:				
Lesson 8:				
Lesson 9:				
Lesson 10:				
Lesson 11:				

Feel free to use the back of this sheet for any additional comments you wish to make about the sentence-combining lessons. Please return the completed questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope to:

Joe Lawlor
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Thank you for your assistance.

PART III: INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGESTS

PART III

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGESTS

One activity of the NIE-sponsored Schooling Practices and Effects project is the preparation and dissemination of Instructional Improvement Digests. These Digests, edited by Adrienne Escoe, are designed to communicate advisory information about practical courses of action that can be implemented by teachers and administrators to improve key areas of school instruction. The Digests focus on matters of high priority and concern in the conduct of current activities for instructional improvement.

One area of great priority and concern for educators in SWRL's region (and across the country) is writing instruction. Consequently, three issues of the Instructional Improvement Digest have informed teachers and administrators about current knowledge of writing. These digests were prepared by Communication Skills staff, based on Communication Skills work. These three Digests illustrate how SWRL's work in various project areas may be interwoven, allowing for more efficient expenditure of NIE funds. NIE funded SWRL's research in writing; writing was an appropriate topic for the Instructional Improvement Digests. Because composition staff had already done the research in writing and were very aware and competent in this field, they were readily available Digest authors. This process was much more efficient and much less expensive than using either SWRL staff from other projects (who were not working on writing) or outside consultants hired to write materials that SWRL staff were extremely capable of writing.

The three Instructional Improvement Digests on writing are the following:

No. 2: Write now--Change later: Teaching students to revise. By Larry Gentry. (Based on Technical Note No. 2-80/11: Textual revision: A review of the research.)

No. 4: Teaching sentence structure and versatility. By Joseph Lawlor. (Based on Technical Note No. 2-80/05: Improving student writing through sentence combining: A literature review.)

No. 5: Getting better writing and more writing from students without increasing teachers' paper load. By Ann Humes. (Based on Technical Notes No. 2-80/09: The composing process: A review of the literature; and No. 2-80/21: Specifications for composition instruction.)

Copies of these Instructional Improvement Digests are found on the following pages.

SWRL
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST

No. 2 1981

WRITE NOW—CHANGE LATER: TEACHING STUDENTS TO REVISE

Good writing seldom comes in a first draft. Students should expect to—and learn to—revise their writing. Teachers can help them acquire the skills needed for effective revising.

"During the decade of the 70s, there was no major change in the writing abilities of most American students." So begins a recent news release from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. On the surface, that doesn't sound too bad. In fact, it sounds as if this is one area where education is holding its own. The trouble with the statement is not in what it says, but in what it doesn't say. It doesn't say, for instance, that the majority of students were poor writers ten years ago; nor does it say that the most recent national survey revealed that only 48% of 9-year-olds, 55% of 13-year-olds, and 42% of 17-year-olds can write acceptable essays.

Teachers, of course, don't need to be told that many of their students can't write well; they are daily witnesses to a fact that has only recently captured the interest (and evoked the criticism) of the general public. What teachers do want and need are practical and effective strategies that will help bring about improvement in students' writing.

Recent research in writing indicates that there *are* steps that we can take—steps that do not require more lessons in grammar or more papers to evaluate. What we need to do is to shift more attention from the "products" of writing to the "process" of writing. Typically, instruction has been concerned with only one aspect of writing—the final product. This approach fails to recognize that *how* students write has a profound influence on *what* they write. So let's take a look at one of the *how's* of writing; let's look at revision.

The Many Faces of Revision

When we consider the process of writing, we realize that "revision" means different things to different writers. The professional author may view revision as a large-scale rewriting of an entire manuscript. The newspaper editor may define revision as editing a story for consistency in language and style. Students, in turn, may think of revision as proofreading for errors in spelling and punctuation. Revision is all of these and more, and each has important implications for writing instruction.

If we stop to think about it, even students in the primary grades begin to revise as soon as they begin to write. They erase and adjust awkward letters. They erase and correct misspelled words. And some students erase and replace words that don't "sound right." Older students revise, too. Unfortunately, their revisions are usually limited to the correction of mechanical and grammatical errors. So the problem is not that students don't revise, but rather that the types of revision they make are not productive.

Some types of revision are, in fact, counterproductive. For example, editing while writing often interferes with fluency. Between the time we first think of the words to write and the time these words finally come off the end of the pencil, many of us manage to challenge our writing fluency with complicated series of editings. Students seem to be particularly obsessed with the "mistakes" they make in writing. They are constantly thinking about spelling and grammar as they try to write (Elbow, 1973).

One of our responsibilities, then, is to help students learn when to revise and when not to. As children first learn to form letters, and later words, it is inevitable that they focus on each stroke of the pencil and each part of the word. Many students retain and perpetuate these habits when they begin writing sentences and stories. To teach writing as a form of meaningful expression, primary-grade teachers need techniques that can free students from such self-defeating practices. The message should come first; mistakes can be corrected later. Revision should not interfere with the flow of ideas.

Write Now—Change Later

One way of introducing primary-grade children to the concept of "write now—change later" is to present a two-day lesson that encourages delayed revision. After students have a topic, tell them to write on only every *other* line. Tell them often not to worry about spelling; "just use the spelling that looks or 'sounds' right for any word you don't know." Further, students shouldn't erase. If they need to delete or change something they should cross it out and make changes between the lines. Tell them not to be afraid to "mess up the page"; they'll have time to make corrections later. When the students have finished these "first-day drafts," have them put their papers away.

The second day, students should reread their drafts. Now if they wish, they can make changes in the content and organization of these drafts. This is the time for students to take out a fresh sheet of paper. With the first-day draft in front of them, students write a new draft. As they rewrite, it's a good idea for you to circulate throughout the room and furnish correct spellings for those who ask.

As students begin to get the knack of revising their writing, you can try a variation of the two-day procedure. First, get some duplicating paper in several colors. Next, draw parallel lines on a duplicating master and produce enough lined copies of each color for the entire class. Set aside one color for first drafts, another for second drafts, and so on. As students work through two or more drafts, they should save their old drafts in writing folders. These folders help students, parents, and teachers evaluate progress and provide material for bulletin-boards that feature the stages of revision in a highly visible form.

Freewriting

Elementary-school students are not the only ones who need to get rid of the damaging habits of correcting-while-writing and replace these habits with strategies for effective writing. No one should allow their concern over such matters as vocabulary and grammar to slow down and interfere with the generation of ideas. You can bring home this point to students by using what Elbow calls *freewriting* exercises. At least three times a week students should write for five to ten minutes without stopping. They can write anything they think of, as long as they don't look back, correct, or cross out. If students can't think of anything to write about, they can simply write "I can't think of anything" over and over again. This strategy usually moves even the most uninspired writer. The idea is to keep going—for five or ten minutes. Later, as students become more fluent at putting their thoughts onto paper, freewriting exercises can serve as beginning points for stories and reports.

Productive Revision

So far, we have focused on (1) ridding students of the "kinds of corrections" that interfere with fluent writing and (2) introducing them to the idea of "revision"—that a "good" piece of writing often requires more than one attempt. The most obvious next step, of course, is to teach students how to carry out the types of revision that will help their writing the most.

Proofreading and editing are two aspects of revisions that are generally well covered in most language arts and English textbooks. It is the higher-level revision skills—those involving the addition, deletion, and reordering of content—that are not usually well-known. Students at all levels can be introduced to these higher-level processes by brief examples. You can use overhead transparencies or teacher-prepared worksheets to show students how content can be added, deleted, or rearranged. Once students have been exposed to a strategy, however, it is important that they practice it often in their own writing. At this point—the point of application—students become dependent on feedback from an audience in order to know when revision is desirable or necessary.

Feedback

The importance of feedback cannot be overstressed. All writers write for an audience—even when that audience is none other than the teacher (as it often is in many school writing situations). If the audience ignores the ideas and content in a piece of writing, the writer is apt to believe that ideas and content are unimportant and not worth improving. If, on the other hand, the audience is willing to ask stimulating questions, provide needed information, and suggest new ideas, the writer is more inclined to revise.

One way to provide feedback in revision is through individual writing conferences. Such conferences don't have to be formal, nor do they have to be of any specified length. The fact is they probably work best when the teacher circulates around the room while the class is engaged in writing. A conference occurs when the teacher stops to answer a question, make a suggestion, or respond to a piece of writing. If the student is working on a first draft, the teacher should react only to ideas and content. Mechanics and other conventions shouldn't be addressed until the student is ready to write a final draft.

The Instructional Improvement Digest communicates advisory information about practical courses of action that can be implemented by teachers and administrators to improve key areas of school instruction. The series of Digest topics draws upon inquiry associated with SWRL's Proficiency Verification Systems and Services and other pertinent research. The Digest seeks to focus on matters of high priority and concern in the conduct of current activities for instructional improvement. Suggestions of topics for future inclusion in the Digest series are invited, and may be directed to Adrienne S. Escoe, Editor, Instructional Improvement Digest, Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720.

Preparation of Instructional Improvement Digest is part of SWRL's inquiry into Schooling Practices and Effects, which is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Education, Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of NIE, and no official endorsement by NIE should be inferred. **(The Digest may be duplicated and distributed to interested educators.)**

Peer-Response Groups

A second method of providing feedback is through peer-response groups. This strategy has the added advantage of providing new audiences for the writer. Such groups have been used successfully by teachers from the third grade through college levels. The structure and functions of various peer-response groups can vary from the simple to the complex. In its simplest form, a small group of students meets periodically to read their stories orally and listen to comments and suggestions from other students. Groups at the high school and college levels are sometimes given extensive checklists with which they evaluate and critique essays from their fellow students.

Crowhurst (1979) describes a peer-response technique that has been used successfully in elementary school classrooms and that seems to strike a happy medium between the simplest and most complex arrangements. Using this technique, groups of four or five students meet about once a week, with each student bringing a composition to the session. The group sits in a circle and passes their drafts around the circle. Every group member reads each composition and writes comments on a clean sheet of paper each time. Thus, each student receives three or four sets of comments at the end of the session. Writers are free to accept or reject the suggestions; the important thing is that they are writing for a specific audience and receiving feedback about content and ideas. The following are suggestions for using this technique.

1. Allow students to remain in the same groups for several weeks before reassigning them. Place each pupil with at least one friend whenever possible.

2. Mix students with varied writing abilities within each group. Those who haven't been writing well can profit from exposure to those who are more skilled.

3. Tell students to say something positive and to make specific suggestions for improving the composition.

4. Use examples of responses to show the difference between useful reactions and those that are not so useful.

5. Explain that peer responses are only opinions and that they may or may not be used in revising.

6. In early sessions, responses should be made only in writing and not vocalized. This reduces the possibility of argument or debate. As students become more skilled in giving and receiving feedback, responses may be given orally.

Publication

An important reason that many students don't revise is that they don't see their writing as having permanency. Writing is assigned, accomplished, graded, and discarded. It is often viewed by students as an unrewarding task to be done quickly and then forgotten. Teachers at all levels can help remedy this situation by providing for publication. Like writing conferences and responses from other students, the prospect of publication gives students an audience and thus, a good reason to draft and rewrite.

At secondary levels, students can organize and publish a class magazine or other publication. High school and junior high newspapers will often accept material from non-staff members. Teachers can also encourage students to express their opinions by writing to local letters-to-the-editor columns.

In the elementary grades, students can publish a class newspaper, write group or individual letters to prominent people, and can even be encouraged to write material for magazines that publish children's writing. Teachers in the primary grades give students a taste of publication when they post finished products on the classroom wall. A more ambitious, but more motivating method of preserving and displaying student writing is the creation of individual "books." Students can be told that after they have written and revised five stories, they may select one for typing and publication. The story should be typed on a primary typewriter and bound between heavy cardboard covers, which may be covered with shelf-paper or decorated in other ways. Display these books prominently in the classroom library for others to read and enjoy. Stir up enthusiasm by reading these books aloud to students often.

Revision is only one aspect of writing, but it's an aspect that is often overlooked in instruction. Students can and will engage in productive revision if teachers help them to approach writing as a process. When we allow writing to evolve through productive revision, we are certain to see improved finished products. We will also see more students who enjoy writing and who take pride in their new-found ability to communicate with the written word.

References

Crowhurst, M. The writing workshop: An experiment in peer response to writing. *Language Arts*, 1979, *56*, 757-762.

Elbow, P. *Writing without teachers.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

—Larry Gentry,
Associate Member of the Professional Staff
SWRL Educational Research and Development

Comments . . .

More on Teaching Students to Revise

It is important for teachers to know the difference between the perspectives or assumptions they have about writing and the techniques or strategies they use to teach children to write. For example, to believe that "message comes first" gives teachers a perspective in teaching, but it alone does not give them the techniques or strategies needed for teaching. Other important points that can serve as perspectives from which to develop teaching strategies are: (a) children as young as six already know a lot about the written language system, (b) children develop this knowledge through interaction with meaningful print and interested readers and writers—i.e., much cannot and *should* not be explicitly taught, and (c) as children develop new knowledge and strategies, they may temporarily "regress" in other areas. My point here is that techniques should not precede these perspectives or assumptions. For instance, teachers who believe form to be more important than the message may use the techniques suggested in this article in such a way that they may become detrimental rather than beneficial.

Keeping this notion in mind, I'd like to suggest some other strategies for teaching students to revise. If teachers want to help students become better writers, the first prerequisite is that teachers begin to write *themselves*—that *they* learn to revise (rather than merely to edit), that they share various drafts of one piece with their students.

Teach students *how* to mess up a page. Show them insertion marks, cross-outs, arrows, cutting and pasting, etc.

If students are too immature as writers to be held accountable for perfection in corrections, the last step in revising (i.e., editing) and the conference that goes along with it can focus on just a few items. But the final published product should be typed and perfectly spelled and punctuated (so that other readers develop the expectation that there are indeed standardized conventions and that these are always used in *published* work). That means the teacher acts as an editor/typesetter and makes sure the final copy is correct (that does *not* extend to changing any words).

Carole Edelsky
Assistant Professor
Arizona State University
Tempe

. . . And Some Questions About the Digest

Huntington Beach Union High School District has a very successful writing program which is based on many of the principles which Larry Gentry includes in his article, "Write Now—Change Later: Teaching Students to Revise." We do encourage that the teaching of editing skills (grammar, punctuation, etc.) be separated from pre-writing, writing, and re-writing. In the revising stage our focus is on teaching students techniques for adding, deleting, substituting, and rearranging what they have written, as well as teaching them to direct their writing to a variety of audiences, not only the teacher/evaluator.

I'd also like to suggest that what we need to make a case for now is where, when, and how we teach mechanics and punctuation without having this concern take over the whole program.

As a reaction to the *Digest* itself—which contains many fine practical ideas for the classroom teacher—I do have a few questions. Is there a connecting theme to the *Digest* from issue to issue, or does it spot in on a multitude of instructional concerns? I am also curious to know whether the *Digest* is designed for teachers at all grade levels or just specific levels.

Chris Rice, Supervisor
Program Development
Huntington Beach Union High
School District, California

Editor's Note:

The connection between articles of each issue of the *Digest* is a functional rather than thematic one. Each *Digest* shares a common goal of presenting effective and practical strategies of instruction that are drawn from research findings. However, the *Comments* section of each issue serves as a continuing forum for discussion of topical information. The *Digest* is not directed toward teachers of one particular grade level or range of levels. Our experience has been that the more central concerns of instruction, which are the topics of the *Digest*, have wide application among various ages and abilities of students.

Readers' comments are always welcome.

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

BULK RATE
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 87
LOS ALAMITOS, CA
90720

SWRL
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST

No. 4 1981

TEACHING SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND VERSATILITY

Teaching students how to be good writers requires direct instruction and practice on a variety of complex tasks. For example, students must learn how to generate, select, and arrange their ideas. They must learn how to transcribe those ideas into written text, and they must learn how to revise and edit their writing. One of the most difficult aspects of this complex process is learning how to construct effective, versatile sentences. In any piece of writing, sentences carry the substance of the writer's meaning. They are critical to the success of a written piece. Yet direct instruction on crafting versatile sentences is conspicuously absent from most classrooms. And it shows.

Teachers at all levels—from the primary grades to college—recognize a common shortcoming in their students' writing: a limited repertoire of sentence structures. In attempting to avoid errors, students try to stay on safe ground, constructing sentences with the bare minimum—a subject, a verb, and an object. Such short sentences are fine in company with other sentence structures, but as a steady diet, they make dull reading. And they are really not as structurally "safe" as they appear to be. Because the ideas being communicated in a composition are often difficult and cumbersome to convey in subject-verb-object sentences, the probability of including fragments, run-ons, and other common faults is greatly increased.

How Can We Teach Versatile Sentence Structures?

In the past we have tried to teach sentence structure through grammar exercises. We've introduced students to a baffling array of grammatical terms. We've asked students to underline subjects, predicates, and prepositional phrases. We've had them draw circles around adverbs, adjectives, and conjunctions. In short, we've assigned countless exercises that required students to analyze and dissect sentences. The limitation of this approach is that it doesn't deal with the real act of writing. When you write, you put sentences together. You don't take them apart.

This is not to say that we shouldn't teach grammar. Obviously, if we're going to teach sentence structure, we're going to be teaching grammar. But what we need is a kind of "applied" grammar—a grammar that doesn't get bogged down in technical terms. We need a practical means for showing students how to construct—not dissect—sentences. At the same time, we also need a technique that teaches students to use the rich variety of sentence structures that is available in the English language.

Fortunately, educational research has identified a way to do this. The technique is commonly known as "sentence combining" although this term actually sells the instruction short. Sentence combining teaches both sound sentence structure and versatility.

What Is Sentence Combining?

The basic idea is very simple: Students take a series of short sentences and combine them into a longer and more elaborate sentence. The point is to combine the sentences in such a way that the important information from each short sentence is retained. There are several ways this can be done. For example, a poor writer might combine the following three sentences by simply stringing them together with *and*:

Mosquitoes are insects. The insects are tiny. The insects spread many diseases.	→	Mosquitoes are insects, and they are tiny, and they spread many diseases.

However, a more competent writer would probably reduce the second sentence to a simple adjective, and the third sentence to a relative clause:

Mosquitoes are insects. The insects are tiny. The insects spread many diseases.	→	Mosquitoes are tiny insects that spread many diseases.

The question is how do we get the poor writer to use the same kind of structures that the competent writer uses. In sentence-combining exercises, we provide a set of signals that tell the student exactly what procedures to use to put the sentences together. Using the previous example, let's examine how the signals work:

• This is the example with the sentence-combining signals added.	Mosquitoes are insects. The insects are tiny. The insects spread many diseases. (that)
• First the student inserts the underlined word tiny into the sentence above it. The rest of the second sentence is discarded.	Mosquitoes are tiny insects. The insects spread many diseases. (that)
• Next, the student moves the word in parentheses (that) to the beginning of the line on which it appears.	Mosquitoes are tiny insects. (that) the insects spread many diseases
• The student then deletes the phrase the insects, since insects already appears in the first sentence.	Mosquitoes are tiny insects. that spread many diseases
• Finally, the student joins the second line to the first sentence.	Mosquitoes are tiny insects that spread many diseases.

It isn't necessary for students to write down each intermediate step in the combining process. These steps can be expressed orally. It's also unnecessary for students to label or describe the combining procedures. The signals eliminate the need for grammatical terms, allowing students to concentrate on building mature, complete sentences—the kinds of sentences we would like to see students using in their own writing.

The example below illustrates the use of another sentence-combining signal, the capitalized word SOMETHING. This signal is used as a "place-holder" that marks the spot where a phrase or sentence is to be inserted:

The divers knew SOMETHING.
There were sharks in the area. (that)

Here's how this signal works:

• The student moves the word in parentheses to the beginning of the second sentence. (Since there are no words repeated in the second sentence, nothing has to be deleted.)	The divers knew SOMETHING. that there were sharks in the area
• Then the student inserts the second line into the place marked by SOMETHING in the first sentence.	The divers knew that there were sharks in the area.

What Kind of Sentence Structures Can We Teach?

Using the three signals explained above—underlining, parentheses, and SOMETHING—sentence-combining exercises can incorporate a wide variety of structures. The examples below illustrate some of the possibilities.

- **Noun Modifiers**

Jack likes peanut butter. The peanut butter is crunchy.	→	Jack likes crunchy peanut butter.
The girl is my sister. The girl is standing on the porch.	→	The girl standing on the porch is my sister.
The police caught the burglar. The burglar stole the jewels. (who)	→	The police caught the burglar who stole the jewels.

- **Noun Substitutes**

We knew SOMETHING. We would win. (that)	→	We knew that we would win.
SOMETHING worries me. We are almost out of time. (The fact that)	→	The fact that we are almost out of time worries me.
SOMETHING is a mystery. The pirates hid the treasure. (Where)	→	Where the pirates hid the treasure is a mystery.

- **Adverbials**

I finished the test. The bell rang. (before)	→	I finished the test before the bell rang.
You study hard. (If) You will pass the course.	→	If you study hard, you will pass the course.
Frodo clutched the ring. Frodo was caught in its evil spell.	→	Frodo clutched the ring, caught in its evil spell.

Although this outline is by no means comprehensive, it should provide an idea of the range of structures that can be taught through sentence-combining instruction. However, if sentence combining depended solely on two-sentence exercises, its effect would probably be small. The point of sentence combining is to work up to exercises that require several different types of combining techniques. For example, the following exercise was used successfully in a fourth-grade program:

The farmer told him SOMETHING. He found a chicken. (that) The chicken was magical. The chicken laid eggs. (that) The eggs were rainbow-colored.	→	The farmer told him that he found a magical chicken that laid rainbow-colored eggs.

(Perron, 1974, p. 263)

Why Does Sentence Combining Work?

Several reasons have been suggested for the success of sentence combining. First, sentence combining is firmly based on students' oral language abilities. Children are remarkable "language machines." Even very young children are capable of comprehending and producing some very sophisticated sentence structures in their oral language. Through sentence-combining practice, we are simply asking students to apply this oral sentence sense to their writing. As students work through sentence-combining exercises, they should be encouraged to say their responses out loud. A practical test of whether or not a response is acceptable is whether it "sounds right" to the student, rather than whether or not it conforms to some abstract grammatical form.

Second, sentence combining does not depend upon knowledge of grammatical terms—those same terms that generations of students have labored over, groaned about, and ultimately failed to learn. The "grammar-free" signals illustrated above release students from the burden of memorizing confusing terms. In sentence-combining exercises, the emphasis is on producing good sentences, rather than on describing them.

Finally, sentence combining works because students enjoy it. Studies have shown that students approach sentence combining with the same enthusiasm that they have for puzzles and games. Students are motivated to solve the exercises because there is an intrinsic challenge to find out what the sentences say.

How Can We Use Sentence Combining in the Classroom?

Although sentence combining is an effective technique for teaching sentence structure and versatility, it is *not* a complete program for teaching writing. For example, sentence-combining practice is not the best way to help students with many important aspects of the composing process such as defining audience and purpose, generating ideas, or revising (see *IID* No. 2 "Write Now—Change Later: Teaching Students to Revise," 1981). In short, sentence combining is no substitute for independent writing. With this limitation in mind, let's look at some suggestions for using sentence combining in a writing class.

- Sentence-combining practice should take up no more than about 15 minutes of class time per day, up to a maximum of 75 minutes per week. Nevertheless, sentence combining should be a *regular* part of instruction, not just a now-and-then activity. Exercises can be scheduled on a daily basis, or perhaps three times a week, but they should be done regularly.

- Sentence-combining exercises can be drawn from many different sources. Although several sentence-combining textbooks are available from commercial publishers, a sentence-combining program does not have to depend only on commercial materials. You might try designing some of your own exercises, using topics that interest your students: school events, holidays, television shows, movies, or sports. The idea is to make the exercises interesting so that students will be motivated to solve them. For example, you can include students' names in the exercises:

  Roscoe, Todd, and Scott think SOMETHING.
  Some lessons are weird. (that)
  They talk about people in their room! (because)
  (Perron, 1974, p. 229)

  Exercises can also be adapted from literature, or from newspaper and magazine articles. Students can then compare their sentences to the original version. Content from other school subject areas, such as social studies or science, can easily be transformed into sentence-combining exercises. Sentences taken from students' compositions can also be used. Some students might even want to try writing their own exercises, which they can then exchange with classmates.

- Students should experience success with sentence combining. The technique can be introduced with simple two-sentence exercises, gradually working up to longer problems. Then several exercises can be combined into a short paragraph, so that students can explore the logical relationships among sentences. In the following example, short sentences are grouped together, with each group representing one sentence-combining exercise. When each of the groups is combined, the resulting sentences can be arranged in paragraph form:

CRISPUS ATTUCKS

Crispus Attucks was a sailor.
The sailor was Black.
The sailor was American.
The sailor lived in Boston in 1770. (who)

One day Crispus and a crowd of colonists marched
toward some soldiers.
The colonists were angry.
The soldiers were British.

The soldiers thought SOMETHING.
The colonists were going to attack them. (that)

Suddenly, the soldiers began to fire at the crowd.
The soldiers were outnumbered.
The crowd was hostile.

The shooting had stopped. (When)
Crispus Attucks lay dead on the ground.

Crispus Attucks was a Black American sailor who lived in Boston in 1770. One day, Crispus and a crowd of angry colonists marched toward some British soldiers. The soldiers thought that the colonists were going to attack them. Suddenly, the outnumbered soldiers began to fire at the hostile crowd. When the shooting had stopped, Crispus Attucks lay dead on the ground.

Paragraph-length exercises can also be used as "story-starters." After students have combined the sentences, they can write additional paragraphs of their own to complete the story.

- Although the signals outlined above are easy to learn and use, they are not the only method available for structuring sentence-combining practice. Some teachers prefer to use a modeling technique. For example, if we wanted to teach relative clauses (although we wouldn't use this technical term with students), we could orally model several exercises similar to the following:

Jerry owns a dog. The dog can do tricks.	→	Jerry owns a dog that can do tricks.

Students quickly catch on to the combining operations once they have heard and recited a few examples. Then they are ready to practice the operations on their own, perhaps in conjunction with other operations that have been introduced previously:

Jerry owns a dog. The dog is little. The dog can do tricks.	→	Jerry owns a little dog that can do tricks.

- Structured exercises—whether they are signaled or modeled—form the core of sentence-combining instruction. However, students should also experiment with "open," unsignaled problems. Such exercises give students a chance to be creative—a chance to explore the stylistic effects of various sentence-combining operations. For example, the sentences below can be combined in many different ways:

The ashtray squats.
The ashtray is fat.
The ashtray is ugly.
The ashtray is in the
middle of the table.
(Strong, 1973, p. 13)

Here are two possible solutions to this exercise. Notice the stylistic differences between the two solutions:

The fat, ugly ashtray squats in the middle of the table.	In the middle of the table, the ashtray squats, fat and ugly.

By comparing alternative solutions such as these, students can begin to get a feel for the influence of sentence structure on style. Class discussions can focus on why one combination seems to work better than another in a certain situation. Again, the emphasis is not on which sentence is right, but on which sentence sounds better in a given context.

We know that students enjoy sentence combining, and that teachers find it easy to use. More important, we know that sentence combining is a proven technique for helping students develop versatile sentences. And, most important of all, we know that students who have acquired that distinctive ability to use a rich variety of effective sentence structures are well on their way to becoming good writers.

References

Perron, J. An exploratory approach to extending the syntactic development of fourth-grade students through the use of sentence-combining methods. (Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 1974). *Disscrtation Abstracts Internationai*, 1975, *35*, 4316A. (University Microfilms No. 75-1744)

Strong, W. *Sentence combining: A composing book*. New York: Random House, 1973.

—Joseph Lawlor,
Associate Member of the Professional Staff
SWRL Educational Research and Development

Comments

On Teaching Sentence Structure and Versatility

The concepts presented in "Teaching Sentence Structure and Versatility" are familiar and useful. Teachers often presume that students know them. But, as Lawlor points out, sentence structure and versatility remain common weak areas in students' writing. This article presents *Digest* readers with a most important review.

Improvement in written expression is a priority item in the Anaheim Union High School District's English program. We welcome and appreciate any help which will assist our teachers achieve this goal. I look forward to sharing the *Digest* with my colleagues.

Mariya Fassler, English
Curriculum Administrator
Anaheim Union High School
District, California

More on Teaching Sentence Structure and Versatility

Sentence combining is a creative and imaginative way to motivate and improve student writing. Grammar does not teach writing. The very etymology of the word (*gramma*, Greek for *something that is written*) indicates that we are putting the cart before the horse when we attempt to teach writing by teaching grammar first. Grammar, however, is so neat and measurable, so perfect for competency tests that we can easily get carried away with the idea that we are teaching something very useful when we teach grammar. Well, we are—much as shop teachers are teaching something very useful when they insist that their students label the tools and the machine parts they are to manipulate. But shop teachers do not teach these labeling skills in a vacuum. They have a hands-on approach that gives all the labels immediate relevance for their students. In much the same way, writing teachers need to give their students something to manipulate. That *something* is the writing that students produce as a result of creative techniques such as sentence combining, clustering, and visualization exercises.

Donald J. Carlos
Instructional Specialist
Department of 7-12/Adult
Instruction
Garden Grove Unified School
District, California

Sentence combining has had an enormous success in the classroom. Teachers have hailed its usefulness both for writing and for grammar instruction. However, teachers should be aware that it is not a complete program in itself. It has serious problems that limit its usefulness. First, sentence combining treats sentences out of context. It is context which determines how a sentence should begin and end, and whether it should be long or short. Second, content, purpose, and audience are all more important in determining the shape of sentences than any extrinsic measure of length. Third, sentence combining tends to produce longer sentences and assumes that these are necessarily better. Students who have been praised for producing long sentences are baffled when university teachers reward short, crisp sentences. Finally, there is no evidence that practice with sentences in books has much effect on the overall quality of students' writing. Examples should always be drawn from their own work—a guiding principle for all revision exercises in writing classes.

Ruth Mitchell
Visiting Professor in English
Office of Academic Inter-
institutional Programs
University of California,
Los Angeles

A Question About the Digest

We are receiving the *Instructional Improvement Digest* and offer congratulations on the pertinent, helpful content of each issue. We would, however, like to learn how we are so fortunate to be on your mailing list. Can you inform me about frequency of publication, membership, and cost of the *Digest*?

Suzanne Howard
Teacher Coordinator
Wilson Elementary School
District No. 7
Phoenix, Arizona

Editor's Note:

To reach a wide audience of educators who can put into practice the courses of action described in the *Digest*, we have tried to develop a mailing list which represents a cross section of teachers and administrators in the geographic region we serve (Southern California, Arizona, Clark County, Nevada). Our plan has been to publish the *Digest* on an occasional basis, about four to six issues each year. Single copies are free upon request, and we encourage reproduction of the *Digest*, distribution to other educators, and inservice presentation.

Readers' comments are always welcome.

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

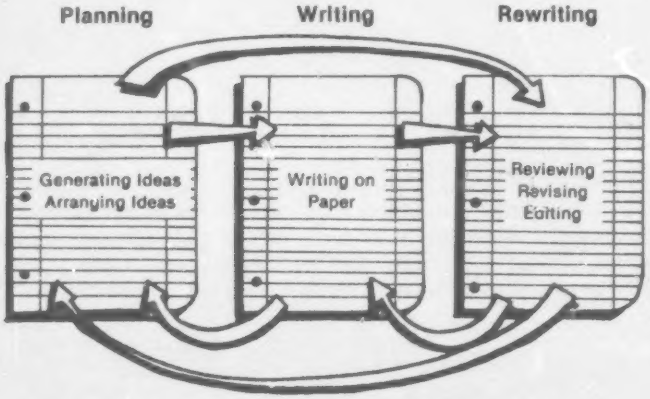
BULK RATE
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 87
LOS ALAMITOS, CA
90720

SWRL
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST

No. 5 **1982**

GETTING BETTER WRITING AND MORE WRITING WITHOUT INCREASING THE PAPER-GRADING LOAD

Teachers and researchers often describe the writing process in three stages: planning, writing, and rewriting. And these stages have subparts: When writers plan, they must generate and arrange ideas; after they have written their ideas on paper, they must review, revise, and edit their text. However, the process is not linear; it does not move in a straight line from planning to writing to rewriting. All planning is not done when ideas are written on paper; all writing is not finished before writers review and revise; all revising is not complete before any editing begins. Writers move back and forth among these subprocesses. For example, after text has been composed on paper, the writer may notice a gap for which new content must be planned.



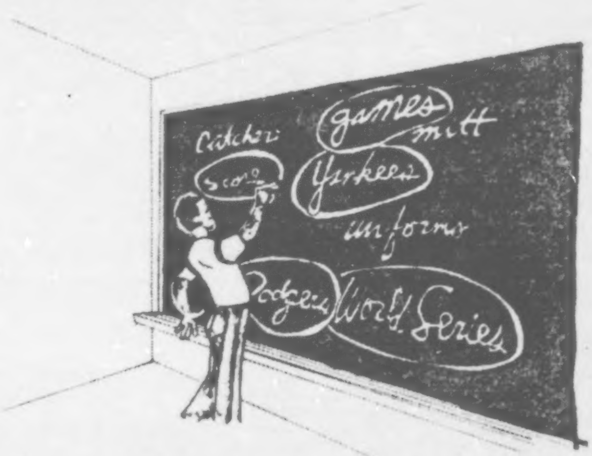
This article discusses some ways to help students with two of the important subprocesses of planning: generating and arranging. Then it gives some tips on getting students to write more without increasing your paper load; in fact, these suggestions may even help decrease your present paper load.

Generating Ideas

Generating ideas is often a serious obstacle for students (and for all writers for that matter)—students don't know how to get ideas for their compositions. Students commonly protest, "I can't think of anything to say." Using the techniques below can help them out of this dilemma.

Word Associating

An enjoyable way to generate ideas for composing is by word associating. Students can do it alone, in pairs, in small groups, or as a whole class. Word associating involves generating and recording words that are elicited by an object, idea, or event. For example, if students are going to write about baseball, they think of words that relate to the word "baseball" and write these words down. When the whole class is word associating, the words can be written on the chalkboard. When students have generated more associations than they need, they can then choose the words that represent ideas to include in their compositions. Choice can be determined by significance of the ideas and by their relation to each other. Students identify their selections by circling the ideas/words they want to use.



Idea-Generating Questions

Another simple technique that helps students generate ideas is self-questioning. Students ask themselves questions about a topic or broad area of interest in order to probe their own minds for ideas. Below are examples of idea-generating questions students can be taught to ask themselves. These questions are listed by some types of writing that students commonly undertake.

Some of the questions are very simple, such as those that students can ask themselves when they are going to describe something. Questions for writing a story are also relatively simple. The questions that students use when they are writing something factual are a little more difficult, but with practice, students can use these questions successfully. Even if they can't answer all the questions, those questions that students can answer will produce enough ideas to begin writing. The same qualification applies to the probes used for persuasive writing.

These sets of idea-generating questions are particularly helpful when they are displayed on the chalkboard, on the bulletin board, or on charts posted around the classroom. Then students can refer to the questions whenever they need help in generating ideas for writing.

Questions for Generating Content

Questions That Can Be Asked When Describing Something:

1. What does it look like?
    What size is it?
    What shape is it?
    What color is it?
2. What does it smell like?
3. What does it sound like?
4. What does it feel like?
5. What does it taste like?

Questions That Can Be Asked When Writing a Story:

1. What happened first?
2. What happened next? Next?
3. What happened last?
4. When did it happen?
5. Where did it happen?
6. Who did it happen to?

Questions That Can Be Asked When Writing Something Factual:

1. What is the topic?
2. What part of the topic should I write about?
3. How can I illustrate the topic?
4. What questions can I ask about the topic? What are the answers to these questions?
5. Do I have any problems with this topic?
6. What are the solutions to those problems?

Questions That Can Be Asked When Writing Something Persuasive:

1. What opinion can a person have about this topic?
2. Which of them is my opinion?
3. What reasons can others give to show that my opinion is wrong?
4. What reasons can I give to show that my opinion is right?
5. What can I say to prove that my reason is a good reason?

Matrix Constructing

A matrix is a chart that students construct to generate ideas. These ideas fit into cells at the intersections of the horizontal and vertical categories. A matrix can help students generate content from reference sources as well as probe their own minds for ideas. In generating content from reference sources, students record the information about the same subtopic as it is found in each source. Below are two examples of matrices: one is for generating content from reference sources; the other is for comparing the physical features of several characters in a story.

Example Matrix for Generating Content from Sources

Source	Definition of Igloos	Furnishings of Igloos
Seasons of the Eskimo Bremmer, Fred		
"Igloo" *World Book Encyclopedia*		
An Eskimo Family Silver-Burdett Company		

(Adapted from McKenzie, 1979, p. 785)

Matrix for Comparing Several Characters

Character	Size	Voice	Hair Color	Eye Color	Most Noticeable Feature
Character 1					
Character 2					
Character 3					

Arranging Ideas

Once ideas are generated, they can then be arranged in appropriate presentation order. Arranging is important because it contributes structure to the composition. A

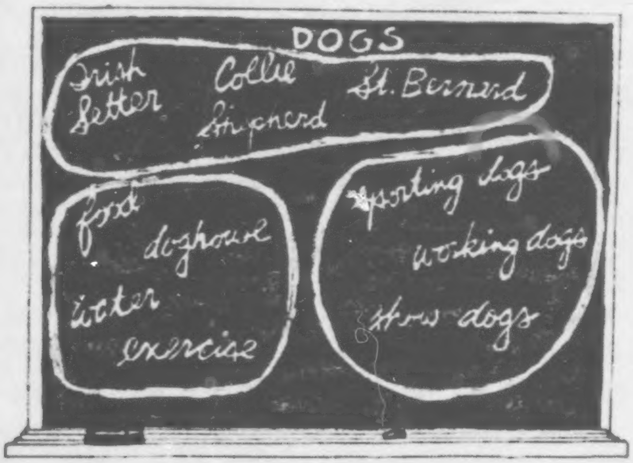
The Instructional Improvement Digest communicates advisory information about practical courses of action that can be implemented by teachers and administrators to improve key areas of school instruction. The series of Digest topics draws upon inquiry associated with SWRL's Proficiency Verification Systems and Services and other pertinent research. The Digest seeks to focus on matters of high priority and concern in the conduct of current activities for instructional improvement. Suggestions of topics for future inclusion in the Digest series are invited, and may be directed to Adrienne S. Escoe, Editor, Instructional Improvement Digest, Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720.

Preparation of Instructional Improvement Digest is part of SWRL's inquiry into Schooling Practices and Effects, which is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Education, Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of NIE, and no official endorsement by NIE should be inferred. **(The Digest may be duplicated and distributed to interested educators.)**

structure facilitates the writer's task and the reader's comprehension. To develop this structure, students must see ideas as part of a coherent whole; students must also perceive and then create superordinate and subordinate relationships. The strategies below help students with these cognitive processes.

Clustering

Clustering is a useful technique for ordering ideas that are generated by word associating. (In fact, some people use the term "clustering" to refer to both word associating and its concomitant ordering.) When students have generated many words, the related words are clustered into groups by larger circles and then ordered within those clusters. When few words have been generated, students may either draw arrows from one circled word to another or number the words in presentation order.



Shuffling

One strategy that helps students learn how to arrange their ideas is "card shuffling." Students write each idea on a separate card or small piece of paper as they think of an idea. Then they physically reorder the cards or papers, moving them around to test different arrangements until closely related ideas are on adjacent cards. The cards can even be arranged into groups of related ideas that deal with subtopics in a composition.

This procedure gives students considerable practice in arranging: Rearranging the cards is so easy that students need little urging to seek the best possible order for their ideas. Students are not reluctant to reorder topics and subtopics repeatedly, as they may be when many ideas are written consecutively on full pages.

Arrangement Plans

Students' ability to arrange is facilitated by knowledge of specific arrangement plans. For example, students need to use spatial ordering when they describe something; consequently, writing is improved when students learn to arrange their descriptive content into side-to-side order—"on the right side of the room..., in the corner..., in the middle of the room..., on the other side...." They should also learn that stories are arranged in chronological order; even a flashback is arranged chronologically within itself. Some factual writing is also arranged in chronological order, but the content often requires students to use other ordering. For example, news stories are arranged so that the most important information comes first; comparisons are arranged by the parts of the two or more things being compared. Older students need to know that persuasive writing is arranged by the effectiveness and importance of their arguments—usually from least to most effective and important.

Information about arranging and connecting ideas for some common kinds of student writing are presented below. Other arrangements are possible, but those below are ones frequently needed in school writing. After discussing this information with students, teachers can post it in the classroom for students' reference during composing.

Arranging Ideas for Describing

When you describe something, arrange the ideas in space order. You can describe from

- top to bottom, or bottom to top,
- left to right, or right to left,
- inside to outside, or outside to inside.

Connect your sentences and paragraphs with words that show space order, like *on top of, next to, beside, in the corner.*

Arranging Ideas for Storytelling

When you write a story, arrange your ideas so that you have a beginning, a middle, and an ending to the story. Tell the events of your story in the order that they happened. If you include a flashback, tell the events in the flashback in the order that they happen. Connect the sentences and paragraphs in your story with words that show time order, like *then, later that day, the next morning.*

Arranging Ideas for Informing and Explaining

When you write information or write to explain something, arrange your ideas in an order that makes the best sense for your topic.

For a comparison of two things:	Write about the same part of both things before you write about a different part, or write all your ideas about one thing and then all your ideas about the other thing.
For a newspaper report:	Arrange your ideas by how important they are—put the most important ideas first.

For directions:	Write the directions in the order that you do each step.
For a science report:	Tell what you did and what the results were.

Connect your sentences and paragraphs with words like *also, on the other hand, because, after that, next.*

Arranging Ideas for Persuading

When you want to persuade someone that your opinion is right, arrange your ideas in order of how important they are. You can also arrange them by writing.

- the reasons for and then the reasons against,
- the reasons against and then the reasons for.

Connect your sentences and paragraphs with words like *because, for that reason, also, next.*

Increasing Writing Practice Without Increasing the Paper Load

Teachers know and research confirms that students write better if they write every day. However, teachers who wish to provide more writing practice are immediately confronted with two problems:

1. Where to find time for writing in an already overscheduled day,
2. How to get students to write more, yet not have to grade more papers.

One solution to the first problem is to reallocate a portion of the time devoted to reading. Some teachers have made this adjustment, and their students' reading scores have gone up—students' reading improved when their time spent on writing increased (Graves & Murray, 1980). The second problem may be solved by several techniques presented below.

Freewriting

Freewriting is a good technique to give students regular practice in writing, yet it does not burden the teacher with additional paper grading (Elbow, 1973). Students are first given two constraints. Then they start writing, and they keep moving their pencils until they are told to stop. These are the two constraints:

1. Do not stop moving your pencil to think about spelling or punctuation or grammar or any of the rules.
2. Do not stop moving your pencil even if you can't think of anything to say—either just keep writing, "I can't think of anything to say," or repeat your last word over and over. Eventually you will find something to write about.

Unlike other writing assignments, freewriting is not looked at at all unless teachers have no other way to make sure that students have done their freewriting. It would be a mistake for a teacher ever to try to grade a freewriting assignment or read it for correctness. The purposes are simply to give students writing practice and to convince them that they do, indeed, have something to put down on paper.

Journal Writing

Another appropriate technique for ungraded writing is journal writing. Students write at least three sentences in a special notebook or notebook section at any time during each day. They write about something they see, think about, are confused about, or want to complain about. Some teachers collect the journals and write responses to the students; they respond to the content (to what students write about), not to the form (to the correctness of the writing). However, teachers may choose not to read the journals at all, allowing the students' writing to be private, personal reflections.

Keeping a journal gives students both important writing practice and first-hand experience with writing as a way of communicating. Teachers have found and studies have shown that students who keep journals and write in them regularly improve their writing dramatically over the duration of a school year (Staton, 1981).

Sentence Combining

Sentence combining is an instructional technique to help increase students' syntactic fluency: Students are given two or more simple sentences and taught how to combine them into one sentence. The sentence-combining technique and ideas for developing sentence-combining instruction are described in detail in an earlier *Instructional Improvement Digest* (No. 4).

This technique has an additional special application here—it can provide ungraded writing practice. Once students understand the principles of sentence combining, they can develop their own sentence-combining exercises. They can find them in their reading, in books and periodicals, or they can compose the exercises themselves. These student-generated exercises can then be distributed to the class for other students' writing practice. Not only will both problem-authors and problem-solvers get additional writing practice, but the problem-authors in particular will learn much about sentence structure as well.

Peer Critiquing

Peer critiquing is a strategy that reduces the teacher's paper-grading load because students do some of the reading of and commenting on other students' writing. (Procedures for implementing peer critiquing are described in *Instructional Improvement Digest* No. 2., "Write

Now—Change Later: Teaching Students to Revise.") Using peer responses does more than alleviate some of the teacher's evaluation burden. This technique also provides students with insights about their own writing, teaches them new writing techniques by exposing them to the different writing strategies used by their peers, and helps students become more perceptive about written language.

Summary

Students will write better if they understand how to generate and arrange their ideas. Students will write more, without increasing the paper-grading load, by doing freewriting, keeping journals, devising sentence-combining exercises, and critiquing their peers' work. And this is what teachers, students, and parents want—more writing and better writing.

—Ann Humes
Member of the Professional Staff
SWRL Educational Research and Development

Note: This article is an elaboration of the filmstrip "Helping Students Write Better and Write More" (SWRL Educational Research and Development, Los Alamitos, 1982).

References

Elbow, P. *Writing without teachers.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Graves, D.H., & Murray, D.M. Revision: In the writer's workshop and in the classroom. *Journal of Education,* 1980, *162,* 38-56.

McKenzie, G.R. Data charts: A crutch for helping pupils organize reports. *Language Arts,* 1979, *56,* 784-788.

Staton, J. Analysis of writing in dialogue journals as a communicative event. In Humes, A., Cronnell, B., Lawlor, J., & Gentry, L. (Eds.), *Moving between practice and research in writing.* Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1981.

Teaching sentence structure and versatility. *Instructional Improvement Digest,* No. 4, 1981.

Write now—change later: Teaching students to revise. *Instructional Improvement Digest,* No. 2, 1981.

Comments

More Showing, Less Telling

One of the problems of student writing is the lack of concrete details, clear examples, or vivid description. Student writing often suffers from too many generalities, too much "telling" and not enough "showing." Here is a writing strategy that directly attacks this problem. In addition, it generates more student writing, with less paper work for the teacher, and yet emphasizes evaluation of student writing both from other students and from the teacher. It is applicable to a wide range of grade levels.

This writing unit ought to last several weeks, with assignments given just about every day, Monday through Thursday, for example. The daily routine is an important part of the unit.

Begin by giving a "telling" sentence: *My sister is a brat, My room is a mess, Math is hard, The pizza tasted good, The dragon's countenance was hideous.* These sentences may be found in student writing, classroom literature, or can be made up by the teacher. Ask students to begin their writing with these sentences. Their job is to "show" what the sentences "tell." Use any prewriting techniques that may be helpful at this time. After awhile, students may ask if they can move the "telling" sentences around or omit them altogether. At this point, the teacher may want to discuss **topic sentences** since these are what the students have been cued with.

On the following day, collect the papers and read aloud three to seven of them at random. Ask the students for critical remarks. You might begin with only asking for positive comments. The teacher records these comments on the paper, adding comments only if something good is missed. At this point, the teacher grades the paper. I usually put grades of only A through C, not grading or reading papers that are below C. Before the papers are handed back the next day, the teacher may read more papers at home for grades or to check a student's progress. I usually read five to seven papers, giving about ten total graded papers. During the unit, I usually allow students to choose two or three papers not to be counted. They write "Do Not Grade" at the top of the paper to indicate they are taking a bye on this particular assignment.

Many specific writing skills can be practiced, depending on the "telling" sentences chosen. I use them to teach vocabulary *(Estella was a supercilious person),* to practice comparison and contrast *(My mother is very different from my father),* and to help them write about literature *(Miss Havisham and Abel Magwitch were both motivated by vindictiveness).* This writing approach is especially effective in combining literature and writing. When reading a novel, for example, I give students some "telling" sentences about the setting and physical descriptions of characters.[1] Then I give them sentences about characters and their actions or motivations.[2] This is followed by comparison and contrast sentences,[3] and concluded with sentences about theme or writing techniques.[4]

[1] *Lennie was different.*

[2] *George and Lennie had a dream.*

[3] *The relationship between George and Lennie was similar to that of Candy and his dog.*

[4] *The title Of Mice and Men was an example of foreshadowing.*

Part of the success of this writing approach is in the immediate response to the students' writing by both other students and the teacher. It does not have to be a response to a particular stu-

Comments (cont.)

dent to be effective or affective. Concrete detail begins to increase, figurative language grows, clarity is improved, and all of this at no increase to the teacher's reading load.

(adapted from Rebekah Caplan, Teacher Consultant, Bay Area Writing Project)

William Burns, Chairman
English Department
Sonora High School
Fullerton Union High School District
La Habra, California

Organizational Patterns of Writing

In addition to the writing ideas presented in this issue of the *Digest*, students also need instruction and practice with planning and writing longer papers. Longer papers often require a particular writing plan or organizational pattern. The plan or pattern (or combination of patterns) usually develops during the pre-writing stage as a natural outgrowth of an author's purpose and intended audience. For example, a *writer* describing a technical process in computer programming will use a pattern different from one that a social scientist will use in arguing a political theory. *Readers* must then detect the writer's dominant pattern(s) of organization as part of comprehending a message. Becoming consciously aware of the variety of organizational patterns as part of reading instruction can form the basis for guiding students' pre-writing strategies. This reading/writing connection, if pursued by teachers, can present students with additional purposes for attending to patterns other than for reading comprehension. One way to help students become familiar with a range of pattern options is to have them write a paragraph about an idea in different patterns, for different purposes and different audiences. Some of the more frequent organizational patterns useful to readers/writers include:

HOW-TO	—instructions for performing a particular task or process
DESCRIPTION	—describing the features of an experience, event, object, or feeling
PROBLEM-SOLVING	—introduce a problem and specific ways to solve it
ARGUMENTATIVE	—presenting a pro-con discussion of an issue with statements supporting one view in favor of the other
CAUSE-EFFECT	—explaining the interrelationship of two or more events

Consider how each writing pattern can be used for a single topic, for example "Participating in a Job Interview": the HOW-TO pattern can include information on what to wear and what to say; the DESCRIPTION pattern can include observations of the actual interview; and other patterns can be used in the same way. As students become familiar with various organizational patterns, they will benefit more from other instruction and practice with planning and writing longer papers.

Lyndon W. Searfoss
Associate Professor
Elementary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe

Thomas W. Bean
Associate Professor
Reading Institute
California State University, Fullerton

Readers' comments are always welcome.

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT DIGEST
SWRL Educational Research and Development
4665 Lampson Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

BULK RATE
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 87
LOS ALAMITOS, CA
90720

PART IV: SPELLING

PART IV

SPELLING

Introduction

A. "Regularity and Irregularity in English Spelling and in Spelling Instruction" (Technical Note No. 2-82/29)

B. "The Occurrence of Selected Features in Elementary Spelling Texts" (Technical Note No. 2-80/13)

C. "Relative Frequency of Homophones in Children's Writing" (Technical Note No. 2-82/21)

D. Proficiency Verification Systems for Spelling

PART IV

SPELLING

Introduction

For well over a decade, SWRL has been a major center for research and development in spelling. Past work has included such activities as the following: analysis of the English spelling system; studies of the effects of dialect (Black English) on spelling performance; development of elementary school spelling instruction. Although spelling is a surface feature of writing, it is also an important feature of writing--not only because of public demands for correct spelling, but also because correct spelling makes text easier to read and because students who have better control of spelling can be more fluent writers.

The issue of regularity in English spelling is an important one, both for theory and for practice. In the first section in this part, Bruce Cronnell addresses "Regularity and Irregularity in English Spelling and in Spelling Instruction" (Technical Note No. 2-82/29).

SWRL's work with spelling during the present contract period has been directed primarily towards a better understanding of current spelling instruction in the elementary schools. Two sections in this part are reports of such studies of spelling instruction in textbooks:

> "The Occurrence of Selected Features in Elementary Spelling Texts" (Technical Note No. 2-80/13). By Larry Gentry.
>
> "Relative Frequency of Homophones in Children's Writing" (Technical Note No. 2-82/21). By Larry Gentry.

Based on these and similar studies of current spelling instruction in the elementary grades, Larry Gentry has developed prototype assessment instruments that survey students' spelling progress from grade 1 through grade 6. These assessments follow the pattern of the Proficiency Verification Systems (PVS) that SWRL has developed previously (for reading and mathematics) under NIE contracts. PVS Spelling is a set of instruments--three for each grade (beginning, middle, and end of year)--that help teachers and administrators to assess students' regular spelling development. The last section of this part of the report provides background on the development of these PVS surveys and includes copies of the prototype materials.

A. TN 2-82/29

SWRL SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LABORATORY
TECHNICAL NOTE

DATE: September 30, 1982
NO: TN 2-82/29

REGULARITY AND IRREGULARITY IN ENGLISH SPELLING AND IN SPELLING INSTRUCTION

Bruce Cronnell

ABSTRACT

The nature of regularity in English spelling is reviewed, and three categories of sound-to-spelling correspondences are linguistically defined: predictable, frequent but unpredictable, and rare and unpredictable. It is noted, however, that regularity may be a more complex matter for spelling instruction, for which at least eight categories are possible. A revised version of the three-way classification of regularity, based on learner behavior and encompassing linguistic and pedagogical categories, is suggested for the design and development of spelling instruction.

This document is intended for internal staff distribution and use. Permission to reprint or quote from this working document, wholly or in part, should be obtained from SWRL, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720

REGULARITY AND IRREGULARITY IN ENGLISH SPELLING AND IN SPELLING INSTRUCTION

Bruce Cronnell

Considerable evidence is available indicating that English spelling is, for the most part, regular and rule-governed (Russell, 1975). However, it is not completely regular. This paper is an attempt to categorize regularity in a description of English spelling and to determine the role of such categories in spelling instruction.

Because of the complex relations between sound and spelling in English, defining regularity is not a straightforward matter. Venezky (1970) has perhaps best categorized these relationships into three kinds of patterns: predictable, frequent but unpredictable, and rare and unpredictable. (The present author independently set up three similar categories: rules, semi-rules, and sight words [Cronnell, 1970].)

Predictable patterns are, as expected, those spellings that can be readily predicted from pronunciation. (Exceptions to these patterns are minor and thus are ignored here, e.g., the spelling of /č/ in *cello*, of /v/ in *of*.) Some predictable patterns are invariant; that is, the same spelling is used for one sound in all cases. Invariant spellings are rather rare and apply to only a few consonants and vowels, e.g., /v/ → *v*; /θ/ and /ð/ → *th*, /æ/ → *a*. More commonly, predictable patterns involve variant spellings that can, however, be predicted on the basis of environment; e.g., /č/ is spelled *ch* except when after a short vowel, where the spelling is *tch*. Predictable spellings can be learned by rule, although the variant patterns may involve somewhat complex environments.

When discussing frequent but unpredictable patterns, Venezky (1970, p. 270) notes that "Many sounds have variant spellings which cannot be predicted, but which occur frequently enough to merit special attention," e.g., final /o/ → o, ow, oe. Such spellings must be learned in groups of words.

Rare and unpredictable spellings are found only in a small set of words (probably 10% or less of the vocabulary of English), e.g., /v/ → f in of, /ĭ/ → o in women. Such spellings have very limited applicability, although they often occur in frequently used words.

Venezky indicates the relationship between these categories and learning to spell.

> The value of this tripart classification in that it separates spelling patterns according to the behaviors which we would expect good spellers to acquire. Predictable patterns, while they may require a concern for environment, are transferable to any word containing the sounds involved. Variant-predictable patterns require attention to such features as position, stress, or following sounds, but can still be transferred once the appropriate features are known. Unpredictable patterns cannot be transferred to new occurrences of the same sounds, but while one anticipates seeing certain frequent, unpredictable patterns in new words, one does not expect to see the rare, unpredictable patterns there. The difference between the two classes is, then, that the first occurs in an open-ended set of words and the second occurs in a closed set. (1970, p. 270)

However, the boundary between rare and frequent unpredictable patterns is unclear. For example, is final /e/ → ey "rare" or are its seven or so words "frequent"? Since rarity has no absolute values, such distinctions in instruction must be made on other grounds (e.g., usefulness of the words).

The SRA spelling series (Day and Lightbody, 1970, p. T1), for which Venezky was the linguistic consultant, employs these three categories of spelling patterns, coded by color:

- "Words learned through regular spelling patterns" are printed on green, "suggesting the go-ahead message of a green traffic light."
- "Words learned through pattern association" are taught in groups "with a common but not regular pattern." These words are printed on yellow, "indicating that caution should be used in applying the pattern to new words."
- "Words learned by sight" are "essential words with exceptional spelling . . . taught individually." These words are printed on red to indicate "that the spelling is so unusual that it can hardly ever be transferred to another word with the same sound." Included in the sight category are regular words for which the patterns have not yet been taught.

However, consideration of the words in Book A (second grade) indicates that these categories are not strictly adhered to in practice. The reasons are pedagogical in nature and are generally explained clearly in the teacher's notes.

While a three-part classification of sound-to-spelling correspondences seems appropriate for linguistic descriptions, it is not so easily applicable to spelling instruction. At least eight categories appear to be relevant to learning to spell.

1. Predictable spellings; e.g., /æ/ → a, /k/ → c, k, ck, etc.
2. Frequent but unpredictable spellings; e.g., /e/ → a...e, ai, ay, etc.

3. One frequent but unpredictable spelling introduced before other spellings for the same sound are taught; e.g., a...e introduced before other /e/ spellings.
4. One or two useful exemplars of predictable or frequent but unpredictable spellings that have not been taught; e.g., saw introduced before the aw spelling is taught.
5. Irregular words that are "regular" according to spellings already taught; e.g., final /f/ after a short vowel is spelled ff, but before that rule is taught, if is "regular" by the rule /f/ → f.
6. Irregular but not unusual spellings, generally regular in terms of spelling-to-sound correspondences, but not by sound-to-spelling correspondences; e.g., odd, egg, which have irregular final double consonants.
7. Compounds and affixed words that include a previously taught irregular base form; e.g., into and doing after to and do have been taught.
8. Rare and unpredictable correspondences ("sight words"); e.g., who, yacht.

All eight categories need to be recognized for the purposes of instructional design. It may also be useful for teachers to be aware of these categories and of how all words and rules included in instruction fit into them. Such information for the teacher might be indicated in appropriate notes accompanying instructional materials.

However, an eight-way classification system is clearly too complex for use with students. Nonetheless, it is important that students know how to respond to various words and rules in order to make fullest use of the regularities of English orthography (cf. Cronnell, 1971). And, as

Venezky (1970, see above) suggests, it may be most appropriate to use a classification that indicates "the behaviors which we would expect good spellers to acquire."

A three-way categorization, which parallels the linguistic classification described above and which also includes the eight categories relevant to learning to spell, is most suitable for the design and development of spelling instruction.* These categories are based on the type of learner behavior appropriate for different words and rules. The first class ("predictable spellings") covers words that students should be able to spell simply by listening to the sounds and applying rules that have been taught. This class includes categories 1, 3, 5, and 7 above, where previous instruction provides the basis for spelling new words; the spellings of such words are predictable for the learner. The second class ("unpredictable and rare spellings") covers words that must be memorized by sight. This class includes categories 4 and 8 above, where previous instruction cannot or does not provide the basis for spelling words; the spellings of such words are unpredictable and rare for the learner. The third class ("unpredictable but common spellings") covers words in which the sounds help students know how the words may be spelled, but students must learn the words by memory or must check in a dictionary in order to determine the exact spelling. This class includes categories 2 and 6 above, where previous instruction can provide some, but not a complete, basis for spelling new words; the spellings of such words are unpredictable, but frequent or not unusual for the learner.

---

*This categorization was suggested by Donna Schwab, who proposed the labels "listen words," "look words," and "listen and look words," with visual cues of an ear, an eye, and an ear and an eye, respectively.

These three classes, encompassing the eight categories related to learning to spell, are useful in the design and development of spelling instruction. In addition, they provide a framework for instructional purposes, to guide teachers and students. Such a system accounts for the regularity of English spelling, based on linguistic and pedagogical considerations, and indicates the expected outcome of instruction.

References

Cronnell, B. Beginning spelling: A linguistic review of six spelling series (Technical Report No. 35). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1971. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 056 032)

Cronnell, B. An initial set of spelling rules for second year (Technical Note). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1970.

Day, K. M., & Lightbody, P. C. Words and patterns. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1970.

Russell, P. An outline of English spelling (Technical Report No. 55). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 124 950)

Venezky, R. L. Linguistics and spelling. In A. H. Marckwardt (Ed.) Linguistics in school programs (Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

B. TN 2-80/13

SWRL

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LABORATORY
TECHNICAL NOTE

DATE: TN 2-80/13
NO: July 31, 1980

THE OCCURRENCE OF SELECTED FEATURES IN ELEMENTARY SPELLING TEXTS

Larry A. Gentry

ABSTRACT

Seven spelling series were examined to identify the relative emphasis accorded specific spelling skills. The scope and sequence of major instructional categories is presented and discussed. Selected categories, given minimal treatment in an earlier study, are subjected to critical analysis.

This document is intended for internal staff distribution and use. Permission to reprint or quote from this working document, wholly or in part, should be obtained from SWRL, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720

THE OCCURRENCE OF SELECTED FEATURES IN ELEMENTARY SPELLING TEXTS

Larry A. Gentry

In their recent review of elementary school spelling practices, Fitzsimmons and Loomer (1978) state, ". . . if spelling instruction is to improve in schools, it will be the direct result of efforts by authors, publishers, researchers, teachers, and pupils" (preface). It is worth noting that Fitzsimmons and Loomer list "authors" and "publishers" before the other groups. This seems to suggest that the producers of commercial spelling materials wield more influence than scholars or school personnel in determining the nature of spelling curricula.

Other authorities have made similar observations. Petty (1967) notes that "actual procedures followed in the teaching of spelling throughout the country are considerably influenced by the commercial materials used" (p. 70). Tidyman, Smith, and Butterfield report that, "In common practice, the program of work in spelling centers in a spelling book" (p. 344).

The link between spelling instruction and commercial texts is deeply rooted in American educational history. Towery (1979) indicates that, from the colonial period until about 1820, "spellers were the single, most important resource in the American educational system" (p. 24). Early spellers contained lessons in reading, arithmetic, and other subjects, as well as spelling. The use of spelling books did not, however, decline with the publication of texts in the other school subjects. The best example of their continuing influence was the popularity of Webster's famous "Blue-backed Speller" (i.e., The American Spelling Book). First published in 1783, it went through countless editions and reprintings, remaining in use for more than a century. While estimates vary, as many as 100 million copies of the "Blue-back" may have been circulated (Hanna, Hodges, & Hanna, 1971).

The early part of the twentieth-century saw the concomitant growth of the public schools and the American publishing industry. With the spelling-book curricula now firmly established in virtually every elementary classroom, the publishers had a ready market. In the ensuing decades, while spelling instruction moved between cycles of relative emphasis and de-emphasis, the text remained its primary medium. The central role that commercial spelling books continue to play in the curriculum is exemplified by the fact that the 1979 edition of El-Hi Textbooks in Print lists some 35 elementary spelling series, the products of 24 different publishers.

DIVERSITY IN CONTENT

As might be expected when so many publishers are competing for the attention of the education market, a considerable amount of diversity exists in the content of the various series. The disparate composition of different spelling texts has been noted by several authorities. Betts (1949) examined the vocabularies in eight spelling programs. He found a total of 8,652 words in the eight programs, but only 483 words that were common to all series. Ames (1965) conducted a vocabulary study of seven spelling series, and counted a total of 6,043 words; 1,283 words were common to all seven.

Cohen (1970) examined the structural analysis methods taught in nine sixth-grade spelling books. He found a substantial difference in the relative emphasis given different skills. In one book, for example, 46 percent of the content was devoted to affixes and inflectional endings. In another book, only 13.5 percent of the exercises dealt with that topic. Similarly, he discovered that the content devoted to "phonics" exercises ranged from a high of 58 percent in one book to a low 18.5 percent in another.

Graves (1977) replicated Cohen's study to see if spelling content had changed in the intervening years. While he perceived a general trend toward the inclusion of more "language arts" skills, he found that publishers still disagreed on specific areas of emphasis. The investigation revealed, for example, that the relative emphasis accorded affixes and inflectional endings ranged from 7.4 percent in one book to 31.4 percent in another; attention given "phonics" exercises ranged from 9.2 percent to 32.8 percent. Table 1 presents the results of both the Cohen and Graves studies.

Table 1

Percentages of Word Study Exercises in the Cohen Study

Word Study Exercises by Major Category	Textbooks and Copyright Dates								
	(Merrill) 1957	(Webster) 1960	(Houghton Mifflin) 1955	(Silver Burdett) 1957	(Lyons & Carnahan 1959	(World Book) 1960	(Ginn) 1956	(McCormick-Mathers) 1958	(Row Peterson) 1961
1. Affixes and Inflectional endings	24.4	20.5	46.0	25.9	13.5	16.3	29.0	27.7	15.1
2. Syllabication	10.1	5.0	1.5	5.5	4.4	6.3	10.7	7.7	18.3
3. Phonics	18.5	47.7	24.4	30.5	42.4	58.0	25.4	38.0	22.2
4. Responding to the Meaning of the Word	19.7	13.7	10.5	18.1	24.4	6.5	16.6	16.6	9.1
5. Language Arts Skills	27.3	13.1	17.6	20.0	15.3	12.9	18.3	10.0	35.3

Percentages of Word Study Exercises in the Graves Study

Word Study Exercises by Major Category	Textbooks and Copyright Dates								
	(Rand McNally) 1976	(American Book) 1976	(Harper Row) 1975	(McGraw Hill) 1976	(Harcourt Brace) 1974	(Lippincott) 1973	(Noble) 1971	(SRA) 1970	(Houghton Mifflin) 1971
1. Affixes and Inflectional endings	18.4	22.8	15.3	7.4	25.0	24.8	24.5	31.4	12.8
2. Syllabication	1.3	5.0	4.7	3.3	5.4	3.6	3.8	7.8	5.1
3. Phonics	32.8	32.6	22.7	27.6	23.0	9.2	21.1	15.8	30.7
4. Responding to the Meaning of the Word	27.1	11.1	24.8	9.7	14.2	11.6	16.6	23.0	19.6
5. Language Arts Skills	19.9	28.5	32.5	52.0	32.4	50.8	34.0	22.0	31.8

PVS SPELLING INVENTORIES

The diverse nature of spelling texts poses problems for the design of meaningful instruments for large-scale assessment. If more than one spelling series is employed at the same grade level in a school or a district, it can be assumed that not all students are receiving the same spelling instruction. Thus, large-group tests that do not adjust for this factor cannot be considered valid measurements of the effects of instruction. As Cronnell and Humes (in press) say, "To test students on what they have not been taught is unfair; analysis of the content and nature of instruction is a necessary preliminary step to designing tests that accurately assess learning."

One answer to this problem is the development of tests that reflect those factors common to the various spelling materials being used in a school or a district. This is the approach taken by SWRL in the design of its Proficiency Verification Systems (PVS) inventories. These inventories, developed for use in grades 1-6, are based on a computer-assisted analysis of the skills[1] taught in seven popular spelling series (see Appendix A).

The SWRL researchers subjected each text to a detailed, page-by-page analysis of instructional content. Using the spelling skills indices developed by Cronnell (1978), they coded each instructional exercise according to content category (e.g., short vowel, inflectional suffix) and, where appropriate, subcategory (e.g., /e/-e, -ing). These data were then processed by computer, resulting in a content-specific analysis of instruction at each grade level. The next phase of the project entailed identifying the skills that were commonly taught in a majority of the series and determining the grade levels at which most students have encountered the skills. This information provided the basis for the construction of test items for each of the six PVS inventories. A more detailed description of the procedures involved in the project is provided in an earlier report (Gentry, 1979).

---

[1] As used in this paper, "spelling skills" refers to sound-to-spelling correspondences, spelling rules and principles, and other spelling-related content.

In developing the PVS inventories, the SWRL researchers were primarily concerned with two factors: (1) the classification of content, and (2) the grade levels at which skills are normally introduced. Minimal attention was given the relative emphasis of broad instructional categories (e.g., consonants, affixes) at any given level, or the number of exercises provided for specific skills. Additionally, certain spelling categories were given broad treatment in the study. Unlike more stable features, such as sound-to-spelling correspondences, these categories seem to reflect the individual preferences of the authors and publishers. Thus, the original study made no attempt to specify content relating to the following categories: (1) consonant clusters, (2) irregular words, (3) compound words, (4) homophones, (5) abbreviations, (6) contractions, and (7) syllabication processes.

The purpose of the present study is to focus on those features of spelling textbook instruction that were not included in the original investigation. This paper will present data gathered from further analysis of the same seven commercial series used in the development of the PVS inventories. The information gained from this analysis will provide a better understanding of elementary school spelling instruction and will serve as a useful resource for the design of instruction-referenced assessments.

AN OVERVIEW OF SPELLING INSTRUCTION

While publishers differ in the relative emphasis that they accord the various skills, this investigation made it possible to discern the general pattern and sequencing of major skill areas as they occur across the elementary grades (see Appendix B). It was found, for example, that instruction in spelling consonants makes up an average of 61% of first grade exercises, drops to nine percent in second-grade, and remains relatively constant thereafter. An average of 12% of textbook content in both the second and third grades is devoted to the teaching of specific affixes. This percentage doubles in the fourth grade, remains constant in the fifth grade, and increases to a mean of 33% in the sixth grade. These data, reflecting concern with major categories of instruction, indicate that publishers are generally consistent in the sequencing of major skill areas and in balancing instruction in these elements from grade to grade.

The data presented in Appendices B-D permit certain observations regarding the scope and sequence of instruction. The first grade curriculum, for example, consists primarily of introducing the sound-to-spelling correspondences of consonants and short vowels. On the average, the seven spelling series devote 87% of their exercises to these features. Most of the series also include instruction in irregularly spelled words and the vowel-consonant-final _e_ spelling pattern (e.g., name, home). Three series introduce consonant clusters at this level.

Second grade texts present a great deal of new instruction. Typically, almost 50 percent of the text is given to teaching a number of long-vowel spellings, basic suffixes (e.g., -s, -ing), and irregular words. All of the series teach some consonant digraphs at this level, and most give considerable attention to consonant clusters and diphthongs.[2]

After second grade, the introduction of new sound-to-spelling correspondences decreases markedly. The third grade texts introduce an average of 10 specific spellings (as compared to a mean of 27 in the second grade), but typically provide practice exercises for some 25 spellings that were taught previously. The review of long-vowel spellings and affixes receives particular emphasis at this and all higher levels (see Appendix B). Third graders do, however, receive an introduction to several new skills. All series include instruction in the rules governing the addition of suffixes (e.g., dropping final e, doubling final consonant). The spelling of some compound words, homophones, and contractions is also present in all third grade texts. Most books at this level include syllabication exercises and introduce the more common vowel-r spellings.

Fourth and fifth grade texts are similar in the types of content they contain. At both levels, affixes and rules of affixation constitute about one-third of the content. While a number of new spellings are introduced (an average of 12 in the fourth grade and 15 in the fifth grade), more than 70 percent of the exercises dealing with specific spellings is review of material previously taught. Fourth graders are introduced to abbreviations and pronunciation symbols, while fifth graders receive some instruction in the spelling of possessives.

---

[2] There is some disagreement as to which phonemes should be classified as diphthongs. As used in this paper, "dipthong" refers only to the following spellings: /oi/-oi, oy; /ou/-ou, ow.

Sixth graders receive little in the way of new spellings. Typically, five affixes, two long-vowel spellings, and alternate spellings for the schwa sound comprise most of the new instruction at this level. Some series place a great deal of emphasis on syllabication in the sixth grade, but overall, the review of previously learned affixes and affixation processes is the most characteristic feature of texts at this level. On the average, the seven series devote more than 40 percent of their sixth grade exercises to these last two elements.

SPECIFIC FEATURES

The previous section established the relative emphasis given certain major instructional elements by textbook publishers. There are, however, a number of features that, while found in virtually all spelling texts, are usually accorded more incidental treatment. These features include (1) consonant clusters, (2) irregular words, (3) compound words, (4) homophones, (5) abbreviations, (6) contractions, and (7) syllabication skills. One aspect of the present investigation involved an examination of each text to determine the precise content of instruction in these areas. A compilation of the most common content for each of these skills is found in Appendices E-K. The remainder of this paper is concerned with a discussion of the treatment accorded them in the various series.

Consonant clusters are generally introduced in the second grade, although three series include some clusters in their first grade texts. One series presents final clusters in the first grade, but doesn't teach initial clusters until the third grade. There is little agreement as to which clusters should be taught or as to the appropriate grade level for any specific spelling. Only two initial clusters (i.e., sl and tr) and five final clusters (i.e., ft, mp, nd, nt, and st) are taught in all seven series. The lack of consensus as to appropriate grade level is exemplified by the fact that one series teaches the initial cluster sn in the first grade while another series doesn't present it until the sixth grade. None of the 38 clusters appearing in at least three of the series is introduced at the same grade level by all series teaching that element (see Appendix E).

Six series give considerable attention to teaching irregularly spelled words, while the remaining series provides no explicit instruction for this element. Only two irregular words (i.e., said and you) are common to the six. Ten irregular words are common to five series; another twelve are found in four, and 34 irregular words are common to three series. Several words that are taught as irregular are not commonly considered as such. Words such as boy, in, and my are often taught as irregular in the first grade so that students may use them in writing connected prose (see Appendix F).

Compound words are given significant treatment in all seven series, normally appearing initially in the second grade. Of the many hundreds of compound words taught collectively from the second through the sixth grades, only thirteen occur in all series. As with most spelling elements, there is a considerable deviation in the grade levels at which publishers teach these words. The compound *without*, for example, is introduced at four different grade levels. One series teaches *without* in the second grade, while another doesn't teach it until the sixth grade (see Appendix G).

Sixty homophone pairs are common to at least three series. No homophones are common to all seven, and only two (i.e., *brake*/*break* and *to*/*too*/*two*) are taught in six series. Unlike most of the spelling elements discussed in this section, homophones generally appear at similar grade levels in the various series (see Appendix H).

Each of the series teaches some abbreviations, but publishers vary widely in the treatment they give this element. While some publishers introduce a few of the more common abbreviations in the second or third grades, most concentrate instruction in the upper grades. One series teaches scores of abbreviations in the fourth grade and very few at any other level. Others scatter abbreviation exercises in a seemingly random fashion throughout their upper-grade texts. Curiously, only six abbreviations are common to all seven series: *Ave*., *Dec*., *Feb*., *Nov*., *Oct*., and *Sept*. (see Appendix I).

Thirty-eight contractions are taught in three or more series, with 18 of these appearing in all seven. All publishers introduce some contractions in the third grade (e.g., can't and didn't are taught by six of the seven at this level), and most spread additional instruction throughout subsequent grades (see Appendix J).

The continuing controversy over the usefulness of instruction in syllabication is reflected by the differential treatment accorded this skill by the publishers. A few give syllabication a great deal of attention, while others grant it minimal space in their texts. None of the common syllabication techniques (e.g., dividing between doubled consonants) appear in all seven series. The only exercises common to all series pertained to (1) dividing three-syllable words, (2) identifying stressed and unstressed syllables, and (3) identifying the number of syllables by counting the number of vowel sounds (see Appendix K).

CONCLUSION

An examination of the data collected for this study reinforces the notion that, while publishers generally agree on the broad parameters of spelling instruction, there is little agreement regarding the specific content of instruction or the sequence in which content should be presented.

Those responsible for adopting spelling texts for classroom use should examine a variety of series carefully in order to assure articulation with local curriculum guidelines and behavioral objectives. Where the materials in use seem inadequate or inconsistent with preferred practice, it may be necessary for teachers to supplement textbook instruction through other methods.

Finally, those responsible for designing spelling assessments must be certain that their assessments match actual classroom instruction. Studies such as this one can provide curriculum data that will assist in the construction of meaningful and valid instruments.

References

Ames, W. S. A comparison of spelling textbooks. Elementary English, 1965, 42, 146-150, 214.

Betts, E. A. Second spelling vocabulary study. New York: American Book Company, 1949.

Cohen, L. A. Evaluating structural analysis methods used in spelling books. (Doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1969), Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1970, No. 70-12,157.

Cronnell, B. Proficiency verfication systems (PVS): Skills indices for spelling (Technical Note No. 3-78-13). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1978.

Cronnell, B., & Humes, A. Elementary spelling: What's really taught. Elementary School Journal, in press.

Fitzsimmons, R. J., & Loomer, B. M. Spelling: Learning and instruction. Des Moines, IA: Iowa State Department of Public Instruction and The University of Iowa, 1978.

Gentry, L. A. An analysis of the content of seven spelling series. (Technical Note No. 3-79-10). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1979.

Graves, D. H. Spelling texts and structural analysis methods. Language Arts, 1977, 54, 86-90.

Hanna, P. R., Hodges, R. E., & Hanna, J. S. Spelling: Structure and strategies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971.

Petty, W. T. Handwriting and spelling: Their current status in the language arts curriculum. In Hillson, M. (ed.), Elementary education. New York: The Free Press, 1967.

Tidyman, W. F., Smith, C. W., & Butterfield, M. Teaching the language arts. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969.

Towery, G. M. Spelling instruction through the nineteenth century. English Journal, 1979, 68, 22-27.

Appendix A

SPELLING SERIES ANALYZED

Benthul, H. F., Anderson, E. A., Utech, A. M., & Biggy, M. B. *Spell correctly*. Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett, 1971. (Only cosmetically different from a more recent edition.)

Glim, T. E. & Manchester, F. S. *Basic spelling*. (Revised edition.) Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1977.

Kottmeyer, W. & Claus, A. *Basic goals in spelling*. (Fifth edition.) New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.

Madden, R. & Carlson, T. *Harbrace spelling program*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974.

Novicky, W. N. Dorocak, S., Faulhaber, M. C. Himes, M., McNernery, K., Petruziello, R., & Wolfert, R. *Growth in spelling*. River Forest, IL: Laidlaw, 1975.

Ort, L. L. & Wallace, E. E. *Word book*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976.

Thomas, O., Thomas, I. D., & Lutkus, A. *The world of spelling*. Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1978.

Appendix B

GRADE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION OF SPELLING ELEMENTS IN SEVEN SPELLING SERIES

Number and Percentage of Exercises

	1st Grade		2nd Grade		3rd Grade		4th Grade		5th Grade		6th Grade	
Consonants	442	61%	141	9%	124	8%	134	7%	138	7%	67	4%
Consonant Clusters			78	5%	102	6%	65	4%	48	2%	50	3%
Consonant Digraphs			168	10%	69	4%	57	3%	68	3%	6	*
Short Vowels	184	26%	252	15%	21	1%	80	4%	54	3%	76	4%
Long Vowels	38	5%	353	22%	298	19%	271	15%	253	12%	154	9%
r-Controlled Vowels					99	6%	42	2%	56	3%	15	*
Diphthongs			67	4%	42	3%	32	2%	91	4%		
Endings			114	7%	48	3%	28	2%	61	3%	47	3%
Affixes			205	12%	198	12%	425	23%	493	24%	593	33%
Irregular Words	57	8%	198	12%	102	6%	85	5%	71	3%	65	4%
Compound Words			26	2%	96	6%	101	5%	85	4%	125	7%
Special Sets of Words							28	2%				
Homophones					80	5%	53	3%	72	3%	90	5%
Contractions					80	5%	36	2%	60	3%	58	3%
Possessives									23	1%	20	1%
Abbreviations							58	3%	66	3%	50	3%
Pronunciation Symbols							64	3%	63	3%	46	3%
Affixation Processes					123	8%	155	8%	201	10%	174	10%
Syllabication					57	4%	117	6%	188	9%	148	8%
Alphabetical Order			40	2%	43	3%						
Guide Words					24	1%	24	1%	8	*		
TOTAL	721	100%	1642	100%	1606	100%	1855	100%	2099	100%	1784	100%

*Less than one percent.

Appendix C

INTRODUCTION AND REPETITION OF SELECTED SPELLING ELEMENTS*

		First Grade			Second Grade			Third Grade			Fourth Grade			Fifth Grade			Sixth Grade		
		Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises	Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises	Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises	Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises	Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises	Spellings	Exercises	Percentage of Exercises
Consonants	New	19	442	100%	3	82	63%	2	42	53%	2	39	46%	3	45	46%			
	Old				2	48	37%	2	38	47%	2	45	54%	2	47	51%	2	67	100%
Consonant Digraphs	New				5	168	100%	1	24	35%	1	19	33%						
	Old							3	45	65%	2	38	67%	3	68	100%	1	6	100%
Short Vowels	New	5	184	100%	1	30	12%				2	38	48%	1	21	39%			
	Old				5	222	88%	1	21	100%	2	42	52%	2	33	61%	1	19	100%
Long Vowels	New	3	38	100%	9	247	70%	2	30	10%				1	20	8%	2	25	16%
	Old				3	106	30%	11	268	90%	9	271	100%	9	233	92%	7	129	84%
r-Controlled Vowels	New							4	99	100%	1	20	48%	1	37	66%			
	Old										1	22	52%	1	19	34%	1	15	100%
Diphthongs	New				2	67	100%							2	34	37%			
	Old							2	42	100%	1	32	100%	2	57	63%			
Endings in root words	New				3	114	100%				1	28	100%	1	19	31%			
	Old							2	48	100%				1	42	69%	2	47	100%
Affixes	New				4	205	100%	1	48	24%	5	147	35%	6	99	22%	5	96	16%
	Old							4	150	76%	5	278	65%	10	394	78%	14	497	84%
TOTAL	New	27	664	100%	27	913	71%	10	243	28%	12	291	29%	15	275	24%	7	121	13%
	Old				10	376	29%	25	612	72%	22	728	71%	30	893	76%	28	780	87%

---

*Averages based on occurrences in seven spelling series (see Appendix D).

Appendix D

FOCUS OF EXERCISES IN FIVE OR MORE SERIES

First Grade

	Skill	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1.	Irregular words	5	57	11.40
2.	/o/-o	7	43	6.14
3.	/a/-a	7	41	5.86
4.	/e/-e	7	38	5.43
5.	/u/-u	7	32	4.57
6.	/p/-p	7	31	4.43
7.	/i/-i	7	30	4.29
8.	/b/-b	7	29	4.14
	/g/-g	7	29	4.14
	/n/-n	7	29	4.14
11.	/d/-d	7	28	4.00
12.	/h/-h	7	27	3.86
13.	/r/-r	7	26	3.71
	/t/-t	7	26	3.71
15.	/f/-f	7	25	3.57
	/k/-c	7	25	3.57
17.	/l/-l	7	24	3.43
	/m/-m	7	24	3.43
19.	/v/-v	5	16	3.20
20.	/k/-k	7	22	3.14
	/w/-w	7	22	3.14
22.	/ā/-a...e	5	15	3.00
23.	/ī/-i...e	5	14	2.80
24.	/s/-s	7	17	2.43
25.	/z/-z	5	12	2.40
26.	/j/-j	7	15	2.14
	/y/-y	7	15	2.14
28.	/ō/-o...e	5	9	1.80

Appendix D (continued)

Second Grade

	Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1.	Irregular words*	7	198	28.29
2.	-s	7	113	16.14
3.	Clusters	6	78	13.00
4.	-er (root words)	5	41	8.20
5.	-ing	6	47	7.83
6.	/a/-a*	7	52	7.43
	/e/-e*	7	52	7.43
8.	/ou/-ou	5	37	7.40
9.	/ē/-y	6	43	7.17
10.	/th-th	7	49	7.00
11.	Alphabetical order (1st)	6	40	6.67
12.	/ū/-oo	6	39	6.50
13.	/i/-i*	7	44	6.29
14.	/ch/-ch	5	31	6.20
15.	/u̇/-oo	5	30	6.00
	/ou/-ow	5	30	6.00
17.	/ā/-a...e*	7	41	5.86
	/e/-ee	7	41	5.86
19.	/l/-ll	7	40	5.71
	/u/-u*	7	40	5.71
21.	/o/-o*	6	34	5.67
22.	/sh/-sh	6	32	5.33
23.	/ng/-ng	5	26	5.20
	Compounds	5	26	5.20
25.	/ī/-i...e*	7	35	5.00
	/ō/-o	7	35	5.00
	-ed	6	30	5.00
28.	/k/-ck	5	23	4.60
29.	/hw/-wh	7	30	4.29
	/ī/-y	7	30	4.29
	/ō/-o...e*	7	30	4.29
32.	/ō/-ow	6	25	4.17
33.	/ā/-ay	7	29	4.14
34.	/k/-k*	7	27	3.86
35.	/ē/-ea	5	18	3.60
36.	/ē/-e	7	25	3.57
37.	/k/-c*	6	21	3.50
	/ā/-ai	6	21	3.50
39.	/s/-ss	6	19	3.17
40.	-es	5	15	3.00
41.	/ō/-oa	5	14	2.80
42.	CC/V__V	5	11	2.20

*Also emphasized in first grade.

Appendix D (continued)

Third Grade

	Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1.	Irregular words*	6	102	17.00
	Clusters*	6	102	17.00
3.	Compounds*	7	96	13.71
4.	Homophones	7	80	11.43
	Contractions	7	80	11.43
6.	Syllabication	6	57	9.50
7.	e dropped	7	63	9.00
8.	Doubling (1)	7	60	8.57
9.	-s*	6	48	8.00
10.	-er affix	7	48	6.86
11.	/ē/-y*	6	38	6.33
	-ing*	6	38	6.33
13.	/är/-ar	5	29	5.80
14.	/e/-ea*	7	40	5.71
15.	Misc. doubled consonants	6	34	5.67
16.	/ôr/-or	5	27	5.40
17.	/-ed*	6	32	5.33
18.	/ō/-o*	5	25	5.00
19.	Guide words	5	24	4.80
20.	-es*	7	32	4.57
21.	/ū/-oo*	6	27	4.50
22.	/e/-ee*	7	31	4.43
23.	/l/-ll*	5	22	4.40
	/ī/-igh	5	22	4.40
	/ėr/-ir	5	22	4.40
26.	/s/-c	5	21	4.20
	/u̇/-oo*	5	21	4.20
28.	/ō/-ow*	7	29	4.14
29.	/ch/-tch	6	24	4.00
	/ou/-ou*	6	24	4.00
31.	Alphabetical order (1st)*	7	27	3.86
32.	/ā/-a...e*	6	23	3.83
33.	/ėr/-ur	6	21	3.50
34.	/sh/-sh*	5	17	3.40
	/ā/-ay*	5	17	3.40
36.	/s/-ss*	5	16	3.20
37.	/ā/-ai*	7	22	3.14
	/ī/-i...e**	7	22	3.14
39.	/ou/-ow*	6	18	3.00
40.	/ch/-ch*	6	17	2.83
	/ō/-oa*	6	17	2.83
42.	/ō/-o...e**	6	15	2.50
43.	Alphabetical order (2nd)	7	16	2.29
44.	/th/-th*	5	11	2.20
45.	CC/V_V*	5	10	2.00
	/ī/-y*	5	10	2.00
47.	/ī/-ie	5	8	1.60
48.	Alphabetical order (3rd)	7	11	1.57

---

*The number of asterisks indicate the number of grade levels at which a skill has previously been emphasized.

Appendix D (continued)

Fourth Grade

Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1. Syllabication*	7	117	16.71
2. Compounds**	7	101	14.43
3. Irregular words***	6	85	14.17
4. Clusters**	6	65	10.83
5. -y	5	54	10.80
6. -er*	6	64	10.67
7. Abbreviations	6	58	9.67
8. Pro. symbols	7	64	9.14
9. -ed**	5	44	8.80
10. -ing**	7	60	8.57
11. -es**	7	59	8.43
12. /ē/-ee**	6	50	8.33
13. Homophones*	7	53	7.57
e dropped*	7	53	7.57
y to i	7	53	7.57
16. /ē/-ea**	6	44	7.33
17. -s**	7	51	7.29
18. Contractions*	5	36	7.20
19. -ly	6	42	7.00
20. /ou/-ou**	5	32	6.40
21. Doubling (1 syl.)*	5	29	5.80
22. le	5	28	5.60
23. /u̇/-oo**	6	32	5.33
24. Silent cons.	5	26	5.20
25. /ō/-ow**	6	29	4.83
26. /ā/-a...e***	6	28	4.67
27. /ū/-oo**	5	23	4.60
un-	5	23	4.60
29. /ā/-ai**	6	27	4.50
30. /ȧr/-ar*	5	22	4.40
31. Misc. doubled consonants*	6	24	4.00
/ō/-oa**	6	24	4.00
Guide words*	6	24	4.00
/er/-are	5	20	4.00
f(e) to ves	5	20	4.00
36. /k/-ck*	6	23	3.83
37. /ch/-ch**	5	19	3.80
/sh/-sh**	5	19	3.80
/e/-ea	5	19	3.80
/u/-o	5	19	3.80
41. /k/-c**	6	22	3.67
42. /ī/-igh*	7	25	3.57
43. /ī/-i...e***	6	21	3.50
44. /j/-ge	6	20	3.33
45. /kw/-qu	6	19	3.17
/n/-kn	6	19	3.17
47. re-	5	15	3.00
48. Months (set)	6	17	2.83
49. -en	5	13	2.60
50. Days (set)	6	11	1.83
51. /a/-a**	6	10	1.67

*The number of asterisks indicated the number of grade levels at which a skill has previously been emphasized.

21

Appendix D (continued)

Fifth Grade

	Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1.	Syllabication**	6	188	31.33
2.	e dropped**	7	92	13.14
3.	Compounds***	7	85	12.14
4.	Homophones**	6	72	12.00
	Contractions**	5	60	12.00
6.	Abbreviations*	6	66	11.00
7.	-er**	6	65	10.83
8.	Pronunciation symbols*	6	63	10.50
9.	Irregular words****	7	71	10.14
10.	Clusters***	5	48	9.60
11.	y to i*	7	60	8.57
12.	-s***	7	54	7.71
13.	-ed***	5	38	7.60
14.	-ing***	6	43	7.17
15.	-ly*	6	42	7.00
	-y*	6	42	7.00
17.	Silent consonants*	7	46	6.57
	-es***	7	46	6.57
19.	/ėr/-er	6	37	6.17
20.	le*	7	42	6.00
21.	un-*	5	28	5.60
22.	/ch/-ch***	6	30	5.00
23.	/ē/-ea***	7	34	4.86
24.	/ou/-ow**	6	29	4.83
25.	/s/-c*	5	24	4.80
26.	/ou/-ou***	6	28	4.67
27.	/j/-ge*	5	23	4.60
	Possessives	5	23	4.60
	-ion	5	23	4.60
30.	/ā/-ai***	7	31	4.43
	Doubling (1 syl.)**	7	31	4.43
32.	/ô/-aw	5	21	4.20
	/u/-oo***	5	21	4.20
34.	/ā/-a...e****	7	29	4.14
35.	/ī/-i...e****	5	20	4.00
36.	/ē/-ee***	7	27	3.86
37.	/ch/-tch*	5	19	3.80
	/ėr/-ur*	5	19	3.80
	-al	5	19	3.80
40.	/kw/-qu*	6	19	3.67
	/z/-s	6	19	3.67
	/ō/-ow***	6	19	3.67
	el ending	6	19	3.67
	re-*	6	19	3.67
45.	/ō/-o...e***	5	18	3.60
	/oi/-oy	5	18	3.60
	f(e) to ves*	5	18	3.60
48.	-ful	7	24	3.43
49.	/j/-g	5	17	3.40
	/o/-o**	5	17	3.40
	/o/-oa***	5	17	3.40
	-en*	5	17	3.40
53.	/a/-a***	5	16	3.20
54.	/u/-u...e	7	20	2.86
55.	/ī/-igh**	6	17	2.83
56.	ex-	5	14	2.80
57.	/oi/-oi	6	16	2.67
58.	-or	5	12	2.40
59.	/m/-mb	5	9	1.80
60.	Guide words**	5	8	1.60
61.	-ar	5	7	1.20

*The number of asterisks indicate the number of grade levels at which a skill has previously been emphasized.

Appendix D (continued)

Sixth Grade

	Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
1.	Syllabication***	6	148	24.67
2.	Compound words****	7	125	17.86
3.	Homophones***	7	90	12.86
4.	-ion*	7	85	12.14
5.	e dropped***	6	71	11.83
6.	Contractions***	5	58	11.60
7.	y to i**	7	76	11.29
8.	Irregular words*****	6	65	10.83
9.	Clusters****	5	50	10.00
	Abbreviations**	5	50	10.00
11.	Schwa (/ə/)	6	57	9.50
12.	-al*	7	59	8.43
13.	-er***	7	57	8.40
14.	-ly**	6	49	8.17
15.	Pronunciation symbols**	6	46	7.67
16.	-y**	7	53	7.57
17.	Misc. silent consonants**	6	39	6.50
18.	-s****	6	35	5.83
19.	-es****	6	32	5.33
20.	/e/-ea****	5	24	4.80
21.	un-**	5	22	4.40
	-able	5	22	4.40
23.	le**	6	26	4.33
24.	-ful*	7	29	4.14
25.	Possessives*	5	20	4.00
	-or*	5	20	4.00

	Skill*	No. of Series	Exercises	Avg. per Series
27.	-ity	5	19	3.80
28.	-ate	6	22	3.67
29.	/a/-a...e*****	5	18	3.60
	/o/-oa****	5	18	3.60
	/u/-u...e*	5	18	3.60
	-ing****	5	18	3.60
33.	el*	6	21	3.50
34.	-ness	5	17	3.40
35.	/ŏ/-o**	6	20	3.33
36.	-ment	5	16	3.20
	Doubling (1 syl.)***	5	16	3.20
38.	/e/-ea*	6	19	3.17
39.	/s/-c**	5	15	3.00
	/a/-ai****	6	18	3.00
41.	/e/-ie	6	16	2.67
	-ar*	6	16	2.67
43.	/n/-kn*	5	13	2.60
	/e/-ee****	5	13	2.60
	re-**	5	13	2.60
46.	/ėr/-er*	6	15	2.50
47.	-en**	5	11	2.20
	Doubling (2 syl.)	5	11	2.20
49.	/u/-ue	6	9	1.50
50.	/ch/-ch***	5	6	1.20

---

*The number of asterisks indicate the number of grade levels at which a skill has previously been emphasized.

Appendix E

CONSONANT CLUSTERS TAUGHT IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

Initial Cluster	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
bl	5		2		2	2	2
br	1	3	2		2		2
cl	2		2	2	3	2	2
cr	5		2		2		2
dr	1	3	2		3	2	2
fl	1	4	2		4	2	2
fr	2	3	3		2		2
gl	1	4	2		2	2	2
gr	3	4	2		2	2	2
pl	1	3	2		2	2	2
pr	1		3		3		2
sc		5	4		6		5
sk	1		4		3	2	3
sl	1	5	2	2	2	2	2
sm	3		4		3		3
sn	1	6	4		2	2	3
sp	1	4	4		3	2	3
spl	5	5					4
st	1	4	2		2	2	2
str	3	3	3			4	3
sw	3	3	2		3	2	3
thr		6	4		3		
tr	1	4	2	2	2	2	2
tw	4	6	4				

Final Cluster	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
ct	4				6		5
ft	3	1	4	2	4	2	2
ld	4	6	4		2		
lk	4		4	2	2	2	2
lp	3	1		2	2	2	2
lt	3				4	2	2
mp	3	1	3	2	3	2	2
nd	2	1	3	2	2	1	2
nk	3	3	4		3		3
nt	2	1	3	2	2	1	2
pt	4				5		6
sk	3	3	4	2	2		2
sp		5	4		3		3
st	2	1	3	2	2	2	2

Appendix F

WORDS TAUGHT AS IRREGULAR IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

Word	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
	A	B	C*	D	E	F	G
a		1			1	1	
again				3	2	3	4
answer	4			3			4
are		1		2	1		1
aunt	5					4	4
beauty	5			4		3	4
been	2	2		2		2	1
boy		1			1		1
buy	3			2		3	3
calm				4		6	5
come		2		2	1	2	1
dead	5			3		3	
do		2		1	1	2	1
does		2		2	2	2	1
done				2		3	1
door				2		3	2
dough				6		6	5
eye	3	2		2			
friend	5			2		2	4
from				2		2	1
front				3		3	1
give		1		2		3	2
goes					2	3	1
gone				2		3	2
great				3		3	3
have		1		2	1	2	1
height	5			6			6
herd	3			3	6		5
here				2	1	2	2
I		1				1	1
in					1	1	1
minute	5			3		5	
mother					1	2	1
move	3			2		3	
my					1	1	1
neither		6				3	6
ocean	5			4		5	4
of		1		1	1	2	2
once				3		3	3
one		1		2	1	2	1
said	2	1		2	2	3	2
saw		1				1	1
sew	5					6	4

*Series C does not explicitly teach irregularly spelled words.

Appendix F (continued)

Word	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
some		2		2	1	3	2
sure	4	2		3		3	
the		1			1	1	
their				2		3	1
there				2	1	2	
they				2	1	1	1
though	5			3			5
through	4			3			5
to		1		2	1		1
was		1		1	1	2	1
were				2		2	1
what		2		2	1		1
where		2		2			1
you	2	1		2	1	1	1
your	2			2	2	2	1

Appendix G

COMPOUND WORDS TAUGHT IN FIVE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Compound Word	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
afternoon		3	3		3	4	3
aircraft	3	5		6	4	6	
airplane	3	5	3	3	2	4	3
airport	3	5		3	2	4	4
anybody	5	4	3	3	3	4	
anyone	3		3	3	2	4	
anything		4	3	3	2	4	4
anyway	4	5	3	3	4	6	4
anywhere	5	4	3	3	3		
baseball	4			3	3	3	2
basketball	4	3	5		4	4	4
bedroom		3		3	4	4	2
birthday	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
cowboy	3		6	3		3	5
downstairs	3	4	4	4	4		4
everybody	4	4	3		3	4	4
everyone	4	4	3	3	2	4	3
everything	4	4	3	3	2	4	3
everywhere	5	3	3		3		4
fireplace	4	4		5	4	5	5
football	3	4	3	3	3	3	2
grandfather	4	3	5	3	3	3	2
grandmother	4	3	4	3	3	3	2
himself	4	6	4	3	4		
inside	3		3	3	3	3	2
moonlight	3	3			4	5	4
newspaper	6			3	5	4	4
outdoors	3	4		4	5	4	3
outline	6	3	5		5	6	
outside	3	2	3	3	2	3	3
popcorn	4	5	4	4	5	4	4
post office	5	5	5		5	5	
railroad	4		5	4	4		4
sidewalk	4	3	3	3	5	3	5
somebody	5		3		2	3	3
somehow		2		3	2	3	4
someone			3	3	2	3	3
something	3		3	3	2	3	3
sometime	3	5	3	3	3	3	3
somewhere	3	2	3		3	3	4
sunshine	3	3	6	4	5		5
upstairs		4	4	4	5	4	2
without		2	6	3		4	3

Appendix H

WORDS TAUGHT AS HOMOPHONES
IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Homophone	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
ate - eight	2			3	3		2
beat - beet				3	4	3	
berry - bury				6	6	5	
berth - birth	6		6	6			
blew - blue	3	3		3	4	3	
brake - break	6	5		3	6	4	4
buy - by	3		2	2			
capital - capitol	5				5	6	
cent - sent	3		3	3	4		
creak - creek	5	5		5			
dear - deer	4	4	2	2	3	3	
desert - dessert	5	5				6	
die - dye	5			5	4	3	
fair - fare				5		4	6
flour - flower		4	3			4	4
forth - fourth	6			3	6		
hall - haul	5			3			5
heal - heel	5	5		3	6	5	
hear - here			2	2	2		
heard - herd	3	5		3	6		5
hole - whole	4			3	3		3
hour - our	3		4	3	3		
knew - new	3	4		2	3	3	
know - no	3	4		2		4	3
made - maid	5		4	3	5	3	
mail - male	3			2		3	5
main - mane	5			5	5	3	
meat - meet		5		3	3	3	
one - won	4		4	2			
pail - pale	4			3	4	3	
pain - pane	6			4	5	3	
pair - pear	3			4	3	3	3
peace - piece	5		3	4	5		3
pedal - peddle	6			4			4
peer - pier	6					5	6
plain - plane	5	6		4			4
right - write	3	4		2	3		3
ring - wring	5	4		5		5	
road - rode	3		2	2	3		
root - route		6		4	5	5	
sail - sale	4		3	3	4	4	
sea - see	4		3	3			
sew - so	5			3	5	6	
shone - shown	6			4	6		
soar - sore	6			4	4		4
sole - soul	6			5		6	5
son - sun	4			3		3	3
stake - steak	6	5		6	6		5
steal - steel	5			4		4	

Appendix H (continued)

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Homophone	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
straight - strait	6	5			6		6
tail - tale	3		3	3		4	
their - there	3		2	2	2	3	
threw - through	4	5		3	4	3	
to - too - two	2	2		2	2	3	2
toe - tow			4	4	4	3	
waist - waste	6			4		5	
wait - weight	6	5		3		3	
weak - week	6		3	3		3	3
weather - whether		5			4	5	
wood - would	3	4	2	2			2

Appendix I

ABBREVIATIONS TAUGHT IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Abbreviation	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
a.m. (ante meridiem)		6		4		5	6
adj. (adjective)	5	6		4	6		6
adv. (adverb)	4	6		4	6		6
ant. (antonym)	6			5			6
Apr. (April)				4	4	4	4
Aug. (August)	4			4	4	4	4
Ave. (Avenue)	5	6	5	4	6	5	6
Co. (Company)	5	6		4		5	6
D.C. (Dist. of Colum.)	5	6				4	
Dec. (December)	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
doz. (dozen)	5			4		6	
Dr. (Doctor)	4	6		4		5	6
etc. (et cetera)	6	6		4	6	5	6
Feb. (February)	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
Fri. (Friday)		6	4	4		4	3
ft. (foot)		6	5	4		5	6
gal. (gallon)	5			4		5	5
Jan. (January)		5	5	4	4	4	4
Jr. (Junior)		6		5		6	
lb. (pound)	4	6		4		5	6
Mar. (March)			5	4	4	4	4
mi. (mile)				4		5	6
Mon. (Monday)		6	4	4		4	3
Mr. (Mister)	3		3	4	2	3	6
Mrs. (Mistress)	3		3	4	2	3	6
Ms. (feminine title)				4		3	6
Mt. (Mount)	4			4		6	
n. (noun)	4	6		4	6		6
no. (number)	4	6		4	6	5	
Nov. (November)	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
Oct. (October)	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
oz. (ounce)		6		4		5	6
p.m. (post meridiem)	6	6		4		5	6
P.S. (postscript)	6			4	4	5	
qt. (quart)	5			4		5	6
Sat. (Saturday)	4	6	5	4		4	3
Sept. (September)	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
St. (Street)		6	5	4		5	6
Sun. (Sunday)		6		4		4	3
Thurs. (Thursday)	4	6	4	4		4	3
Tues. (Tuesday)		6	4	4		4	3
U.S. (United States)	5	6		4		4	
v. (verb)	4	6		4	6		6
Wed. (Wednesday)	4	6	4	4		4	3
yd. (yard)		6		4	6	5	6

Appendix J

CONTRACTIONS TAUGHT IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Contraction	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
aren't	3	3	5	4	4	6	4
can't	3		3	3	3	3	3
couldn't	3	5	3	3	3	6	4
didn't	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
doesn't	3	3	5	4	4	6	3
don't	3	5	3	3	3	3	3
hadn't	4		5	4	5	6	
hasn't	4	3	5	4	5	3	
haven't	4	3	3		4	6	4
here's		5				3	5
he's	4	5	5	4	5	3	3
I'd	5	6	5	3	5	3	
I'll	4	3	3	3	3	6	3
I'm	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
isn't	3	3	3	3	4	3	4
it's	4	3	5	3	3	3	3
I've	4	3	6	3	4	3	4
let's	5		6	4	5		5
o'clock	4	3	5	3			3
she'll			3	4			3
she's	4	6	5		6		3
shouldn't		5	3	3	6	6	5
that's	6	5		4	3	6	4
there's	5	3	5	4	5	6	5
they're	5	3	5		6	6	5
wasn't	5	3	3	4	4	3	4
we'll	5	3	5	3	5		5
we're		3	5	4	5	3	5
weren't	5	5	3	4	5	3	5
we've	6	3	3	3	5	6	5
what's		5	5	4	6	6	
where's		5	5	4			
who's		5	5	4		6	
won't	4	4	3	3	3	3	4
wouldn't	3	5	3	3	3	6	4
you'll		3	5	3	5		5
you're	6	3	5	3	5	6	5
you've		3	5	3	5	3	5

Appendix K

SYLLABICATION SKILLS TAUGHT IN THREE OR MORE SPELLING SERIES

	SERIES AND GRADE LEVEL						
Syllabication Skill	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Dividing C^1/C^1 (e.g., rab-bit	3	5	5	3	3		4
Dividing C^1/C^2 (e.g., pic-nic)	3	5		3	3		4
Dividing V/CV (e.g., mu-sic)	4	5		3	3	4	4
Dividing VC/V (e.g., fin-ish)	3			3	3		
Dividing ___/Cle (e.g., ta-ble)	3			3	4		
Dividing compounds (e.g., side-walk)	4			6	3		
Dividing after prefix (e.g., re-turn)		5	4	3			3
Dividing before suffix (e.g., dur-ing)		5	4	6	6		
Dividing three-syllable words	5	5	4	4	4	4	5
Dividing four-syllable words	6	6		5	5		
Vowel sounds equal syllables	2	4	2	2	2	3	3
Stressed/unstressed syllables	2	6	3	3	3	3	4
Dictionary syllabication	4	4	4	4	3		

C. TN 2-82/21

SWRL SOUTHWEST REGIONAL LABORATORY
TECHNICAL NOTE

DATE: July 1, 1982

NO: TN 2-82/21

RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF HOMOPHONES IN CHILDREN'S WRITING

Larry Gentry

ABSTRACT

The relative frequency of homophones in children's writing is examined. A composite listing of the most commonly used homophones in Grades 2-8 is provided, as are listings of the most common homophones at selected grade levels.

This document is intended for internal staff distribution and use. Permission to reprint or quote from this working document, wholly or in part, should be obtained from SWRL, 4665 Lampson Avenue, Los Alamitos, California 90720

RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF HOMOPHONES IN CHILDREN'S WRITING

Larry Gentry

Studies of children's spelling errors indicate that the correct spelling of homophones (words with the same pronunciation, but different meanings and spellings) is a difficult task for many students.

Johnson (1950) listed 28 homophones among the 100 words most frequently misspelled by students in Grades 3-8, and seven among the first twelve (i.e., their, too, there, our, through, you're, clothes). Fitzgerald (1952) found similar results in his study of misspellings in Grades 2-6, with 26 homophones among the 100 most difficult words.

Although most spelling texts devote some attention to instruction in homophones, there are considerable differences between programs in the specific homophones selected for instruction. In an examination of seven elementary spelling series, the author found no homophones common to all seven, and only two pair common to six series. Some homophones that are infrequently used in children's writing (e.g., heal/heel, toe/tow) appeared in the majority of series, while some frequently used homophones (e.g., for/four, its/it's) appeared in only one or two (Gentry, 1980).

The present study identifies the homophones most commonly used in children's writing in Grades 2-8 and shows how the relative use of specific homophones changes as writing skill develops. Such data should prove useful in designing appropriate homophone instruction for students.

The study is based on the homophone units (groups of two or more homophones) appearing in Rinsland's _A Basic Vocabulary of Elementary School Children_ (1945). The Rinsland list, compiled from a national sample of children's writing in Grades 2-8 (and oral vocabulary at Grade 1), contains 14,571 words that were used three or more times in some six million running words.

Homophones appearing in the Rinsland list were identified by cross-matching the Rinsland vocabulary with the extensive lists of homophones compiled by Whitford (1966) and Cronnell (1970). This procedure extracted 217 homophone units consisting of 451 words.

A tabulation was made of the grade-level frequency of each homophone occurring in Grades 2-8. "Common" homophones were defined as those in which at least two members of a homophone unit occurred ten or more times at five different grade levels. A total of 49 homophone units met this criterion.

These remaining homophone units were then placed in rank order from most common to least common by listing each individual homophone by number of occurrences. The highest rank was assigned to the homophone unit in which the "weaker" (least frequent) member of a pair occurs more frequently than the weaker members of other pairs. For example, although the word _I_ is the most frequently used member of any homophone unit, its homophonous correspondent, the word _eye_, is relatively infrequent. The _I_/_eye_ unit thus ranks behind those units in which both members of a unit occur more frequently (e.g., _there_/_their_).

By applying these procedures to the total occurrences of 49 homophone units in Grades 2-8, the rank order shown in Table 1 was established.

Table 1

Composite Rank Order of Homophones in Grades 2-8

1. there/their
2. to/two/too
3. know/no
4. write/right
5. for/four
6. here/hear
7. by/buy
8. its/it's
9. new/knew
10. would/wood
11. ate/eight
12. our/hour*
13. see/sea
14. road/rode
15. where/wear**
16. one/won
17. hole/whole
18. through/threw
19. meat/meet
20. dear/deer
21. sun/son
22. passed/past
23. weather/whether**
24. I/eye
25. so/sew
26. we'll/wheel**
27. piece/peace
28. blue/blew
29. be/bee
30. nose/knows
31. flower/flour
32. merry/marry***
33. fourth/forth
34. your/you're
35. seen/scene
36. wait/weight
37. sail/sale
38. plane/plain
39. sent/cent
40. way/weigh
41. aunt/ant***
42. week/weak
43. which/witch**
44. made/maid
45. rose/rows
46. axe/acts****
47. bear/bare
48. heard/herd
49. capital/capitol

---

*Our and hour are homophones when our is in a stressed position in a sentence. When our is unstressed, it is homophonous with are.

**These words are homophones only for those speakers who do not distinguish between /w/ and /hw/.

***Some English speakers distinguish between the vowel sounds in merry and marry, and/or aunt and ant.

****Most English speakers do not pronounce the t in acts.

As a composite listing, Table 1 reveals those homophone units that are most useful across grade levels. Since students in the higher grade levels provided more running words for the Rinsland study than those in lower grades, it is somewhat biased in the direction of older writers. It is revealing to note, however, that certain homophones are dominant at every grade level. Two homophone units, there/their and to/two/too, exhibit the greatest utility at every grade level. Certain other units vary slightly in their utility from grade to grade, but maintain a high degree of usefulness throughout the elementary years. An example of this stability is seen in Table 2, a listing of the 15 most common homophone units in Grades 2, 5, and 8. Ten homophones are common to all three lists; these ten are among the first eleven in the composite ranking.

In both tables, the more frequent member of a homophone unit (or most frequent in some cases) is listed first (e.g., in there/their, there occurs more often than their). As Table 2 shows, this "stronger/weaker" relationship remains the same across grade levels for most homophones. In a few instances, however, changes in relative strength do occur. For example, while no is more frequent than know at Grade 2 (indicated as no/know), the reverse is true at Grades 5 and 8 (indicated as know/no). Other units that exhibit reversals in relative strength include too/two, its/it's, and rode/road.

An important implication of these findings is that many homophone units that are generally considered the province of primary-grade instruction should be reviewed and practiced throughout elementary school spelling instruction. This view is reinforced by Furness and Boyd's

Table 2

Rank Order of Homophones at Selected Grade Levels

Grade 2

1. to/too/two
2. there/their
3. for/four
4. no/know
5. write/right
6. by/buy
7. where/wear
8. ate/eight
9. dear/deer
10. here/hear
11. would/wood
12. be/bee
13. its/it's
14. rode/road
15. meat/meet

Grade 5

1. to/too/two
2. there/their
3. know/no
4. write/right
5. here/hear
6. for/four
7. by/buy
8. new/knew
9. would/wood
10. one/won
11. ate/eight
12. it's/its
13. through/threw
14. our/hour
15. whole/hole

Grade 8

1. there/their
2. to/two/too
3. know/no
4. write/right
5. for/four
6. new/knew
7. our/hour
8. see/sea
9. its/it's
10. ate/eight
11. here/hear
12. would/wood
13. by/buy
14. road/rode
15. one/won

study of high school spelling (1958); the homophones their, there, they're, to, too, two, its, and it's, all prominently mentioned in the preceding tables, were all found in their list of "real demons" for high school writers.

Since spelling books differ widely in their treatment of homophones, it is important for teachers to be aware of the instructional needs of their students and to provide exposure and practice with the homophones that they need in everyday writing.

References

Cronnell, B. Homophones in the vocabularies of children aged 6-9 (Technical Note No. 2-70-14). Los Alamitos, Calif.: SWRL Educational Research and Development. 1970.

Fitzgerald, J. A. Spelling words difficult for children in grades II-VI. Elementary School Journal, 1952, 53, 221-28.

Furness, E. L., & Boyd, G. A. 231 real spelling demons for high school students. English Journal, 1958, 47, 267-70.

Gentry, L. A. The occurrence of selected features in elementary spelling texts (Technical Note No. 2-80/13). Los Alamitos, Calif.: SWRL Educational Research and Development. 1980. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED 192 353)

Johnson, L. W. One hundred words most often misspelled by children in the elementary grades. Journal of Educational Research, 1950, 44, 154-55.

Rinsland, H. D. A basic vocabulary of elementary school children. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1945.

Whitford, H. C. A dictionary of American homophones and homographs. New York: Teachers College Press, 1966.

D. PVS Spelling

PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS FOR SPELLING

Despite many new developments in writing instruction during the last decade, certain elements of the composition curriculum remain fundamentally unmalleable. Among these elements is the teaching of spelling in elementary schools. Although language arts programs often differ in specific content or implied philosophy, all provide for some type of instruction in transcribing language from speech to print.

In most schools, spelling instruction is based on the content of commercially prepared textbooks. These materials are most frequently adopted as a graded series of consumable workbooks to be used independently of other language arts or reading materials. Since a number of major publishers produce elementary spelling texts, it is not unusual for several different series to be employed by different teachers in the same school district or even in the same school.

Even a cursory examination of various spelling books reveals substantial differences in organization and instructional design, even among those written for students at the same grade levels. Texts differ in such particulars as methodology (e.g., code-emphasis vs. vocabulary-emphasis), the inclusion or exclusion of spelling rules, and the scope and sequence of sound-to-spelling correspondences (Cronnell & Humes, 1980).

This diversity poses problems for the design of meaningful instruments for the large-scale assessment of spelling competence. If more than one series is employed at the same grade level in a school or a district, it can be assumed that not all students are receiving the same instruction. Thus, large-group tests that do not adjust for this factor cannot be considered valid measurements of the effects of instruction.

SWRL responded to this problem by developing the Proficiency Verification Systems (PVS) Spelling Inventories, a series of carefully sequenced tests that reflect those factors most common to contemporary spelling instruction. These inventories, developed for use in grades 1-6, are based on a computer-assisted analysis of the skills taught in seven popular spelling series.

In order to identify the specific skills taught, each text was subjected to a detailed, page-by-page analysis of instructional content. Using indices developed by Cronnell (1978), each instructional exercise was coded according to content category (e.g., short vowel, inflectional suffix) and, where appropriate, subcategory (e.g., /e/-e, -ing). These data were then processed by computer, resulting in a content-specific analysis of instruction at each grade level. The next phase of the project entailed identifying the skills that were commonly taught in a majority of series and determining the grade levels and the semesters at which most students have encountered the skills (Gentry, 1979, 1980). This information provided content for the development of three inventories at each grade level: a Beginning Inventory, a Mid-Year Inventory, and End-of-Year Inventory. The content of the inventories is specified in the Appendix; copies of the actual inventories and directions for their use follow this paper.

The inventories are of variable length, ranging from 21 items for the Beginning Inventory at Level One[1] to 40 items for inventories at Levels Five and Six. The majority of assessment items in each inventory are multiple-choice, but all inventories contain a constructed-response section. For the Beginning Inventory at Level One, the constructed-response section assesses handwriting; for all other inventories, this section requires students to generate the spellings of dictated words.

The inventories for Levels 1-3 are designed to be used as consumable, machine-scannable booklets. This feature enables primary-grade students to mark directly in the booklets. Inventories at Levels 4-6 are printed as reusable booklets and are accompanied by machine-scannable answer sheets. Directions for administration were prepared and printed as separate booklets. At Levels 1-2, these directions (and appropriate distractors) are read aloud to students.

The Beginning Inventories for all six grades were field-tested in August, 1982. A suburban, all-year school in Orange County, California, was selected as the test site. The student population consists largely of children from low- to middle-income families. While the majority of children are white, first-language speakers of English, a representative number are from Latin America and Southeast Asia. Black students constitute a very small segment of the school population.

Inventories were administered to 197 students. Teachers administered the inventories to their own classes during the regular school day. There were no reported difficulties in administration and no anecdotal reports of student problems in following directions. After the test, all booklets and answer sheets were returned to SWRL for scoring and evaluation.

---

[1] "Level" corresponds to the like-numbered grade (e.g., Level One corresponds to Grade One). The term "level" is employed to provide for individual assessment across grades.

Computer analysis of the results indicates that the inventories provide reliable data for evaluation and planning. Kuder-Richardson-20 reliability coefficients for the inventories at Levels Two through Six ranged from .83 to .91. The reliability coefficient for the Level One inventory was only .52. This latter inventory was essentially a pre-spelling assessment of readiness skills and consisted of only 16 multiple-choice items. Since the mean score on the Level One inventory was high (14.2), and only three items elicited error rates of more than 20%, the low reliability coefficient appears to be an artifact of the small number of items.

Item analysis, including point-biserial correlations for all items on the six inventories, provided information on the suitability of items for students at the various grade levels. The point-biserial correlations were uniformly positive, and only a few items appear to need revision for future administrations.

The Mid-Year and End-of-Year Inventories have not yet been administered. It is probable that both inventories will be field-tested at the same school at the appropriate times during the current school year.

References

Cronnell, B. Proficiency Verification Systems (PVS): Skills indices for spelling (Technical Note No. 3-78-13). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1978. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 172 250)

Cronnell, B., & Humes, A. Elementary spelling: What's really taught. Elementary School Journal, 1980, 81, 59-64.

Gentry, L. An analysis of the content of seven spelling series (Technical Note No. 3-79-10). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1979. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 192 352)

Gentry, L. The occurrence of selected features in elementary spelling texts (Technical Note No. 2-80/13). Los Alamitos, CA: SWRL Educational Research and Development, 1980. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 192 353)

APPENDIX: CONTENT OF PVS SPELLING INVENTORIES

LEVEL 1

Beginning

SOUND DISCRIMINATION:
Initial consonants - /b/, /k/
Final consonants - /n/, /t/
Medial vowels - /a/, /u/

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION (matching letters): b, c, h, j, u

LETTER RECOGNITION (visual recall): d, g, m, s, w

HANDWRITING (copying):
d, e, k, m, s

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /b/-b, /f/-f, /h/-h, /j/-j, /l/-l, /r/-r, /s/-s
Final - /d/-d, /g/-g, /n/-n, /p/-p, /t/-t

VOWELS:
Short - /a/-a, /e/-e, /i/-i, /o/-o, /u/-u

DICTATION: big, fun, job, ran, wet

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /b/-b, /f/-f, /k/-c, /m/-m, /r/-r, /w/-w
Final - /g/-g, /n/-n, /p/-p, /t/-t

VOWELS:
Short - /a/-a, /e/-e, /i/-i, /o/-o, /u/-u
Long - /ā/-a..e, /ī/-i..e, /ō/-o..e

DICTATION: cut, dig, fed, home, hot, like, sat, save

LEVEL 2

Beginning

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /b/-b, /f/-f, /h/-h, /j/-j, /k/-c, /k/-k, /l/-l, /r/-r, /s/-s, /w/-w
Final - /d/-d, /g/-g, /m/-m, /n/-n, /p/-p

VOWELS:
Short - /a/-a, /e/-e, /i/-i, /o/-o, /u/-u

DICTATION: had, pet, run, top, win

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /f/-f, /h/-h, /k/-c, /r/-r, /s/-s, /w/-w
Final - /b/-b, /g/-g, /ks/-x, /l/-ll, /n/-n, /p/-p, /t/-t
Digraphs - /ng/-ng, /sh/-sh

VOWELS:
Short - /e/-e, /i/-i, /o/-o, /u/-u
Long - /ā/-a..e, /ē/-ee, /ī/-i..e, /ō/-o..e

DICTATION: bake, feed, gum, hill, joke, pop, ride, sad, web

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
Final - /k/-ck, /ks/-x, /l/-ll, /s/-ss
Digraphs - /hw/-wh, /ng/-ng, /sh/-sh, /th/-th
Clusters - dr, nd, sp

VOWELS:
Short - /u̇/-oo
Long - /ā/-a..e, /ā/-ai, /ē/-ea, /ē/-ee, /ē/-y, /ō/-oa, /ō/-o..e, /ū/-oo
r-controlled - /ər/-er
Diphthong - /ou/-ow

DICTATION: broom, cook, drive, rain, read, soap, sweet, town

PVS SPELLING INVENTORIES

LEVEL 3

Beginning

CONSONANTS:
Final - /k/-ck, /ks/-x, /s/-ss
Digraphs - /hw/-wh, /ng/-ng, /sh/-sh, /th/-th
Clusters - cl, mp, st

VOWELS:
Short - /u̇/-oo
Long - /ā/-a..e, /ā/-ai, /ē/-ee
Diphthong - /ou/-ow

STRUCTURE:
Alphabetization - first letter
Irregular words - been, does, give

DICTATION: bath, bring, lunch, prize, rain, why, wood

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS:
Final - /f/-ff
Digraph - /ch/-tch
Clusters - br, mp, nt, sn

VOWELS:
Short - /ô/-a
Long - /ī/-ie
r-controlled - /är/-ar, /ėr/-er, /ėr/-ur, /ôr/-or

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -er, -es
e-dropping + -ed, -ing

STRUCTURE:
Homophones - hear/here, new/knew, right/write, to/too/two

DICTATION: burn, die, march, pitch, send, shirt, small, stiff

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /s/-c
Medial - /l/-ll, /t/-tt
Final - /s/-ce

VOWELS:
Short - /ô/-aw, /u̇/-u
Long - /ī/-igh, /ū/-ue
r-controlled - /er/-air, /er/-ear, /ir/-ear

AFFIXES:
Doubling + -ed, -ing
e-dropping + -ed, -ing

STRUCTURE:
Contractions - can't, she'll
Compound words - everyone, sidewalk

DICTATION: cents, chance, clear, hair, lawn, pull, tear, tight

LEVEL 4

Beginning

CONSONANTS:
- Initial - /s/-c
- Medial - /b/-bb, /d/-dd
- Final - /s/-ss
- Digraph - /ch/-ch

VOWELS:
- Short - /ô/-aw, /u̇/-oo
- Long - /ī/-ie, /ī/-igh, /ō/-o, /u/-ue
- r-controlled - /är/-ar, /ėr/-ur
- Diphthong - /ou/-ow

AFFIXES:
- No spelling change + -ed, -er, -es, -y
- Doubling + -ed
- e-dropping + -ing

STRUCTURE:
- Alphabetization - 2nd & 3rd letters
- Homophones - new/knew, week/weak
- Contractions - don't, we're
- Compound words - afternoon, outside

DICTATION: bright, city, ground, match, near, nice, scare, storm

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS:
- Initial - /s/-c
- Medial - /t/-tt
- Final - /s/-ce
- Digraphs - /ch/-tch, /ng/-n

VOWELS:
- Short - /e/-ea
- Long - /ē/-ie, /ī/-i
- r-controlled - /ėr/-or, /ir/-ear

AFFIXES:
- Doubling + -ed
- e-dropping + -ing
- f to v + -es
- y to i + -er, -est

STRUCTURE:
- Pronunciation symbols - /bak/, /kōld/, /fel/, /līk/

DICTATION: bounce, child, earn, fault, health, scratch, sink, thief, third, world

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
- Initial - /kw/-qu, /n/-kn, /r/-wr
- Medial - /z/-s
- Final - /j/-dge, /j/-ge, /m/-mb, /z/-se, /z/-ze

VOWELS:
- Short - /ô/-augh, /ô/-ough
- Long - /ū/-ew
- r-controlled - /ôr/-ore
- Diphthongs - /oi/-oi, /oi/-oy

AFFIXES:
- e-dropping + -est
- f to v + -es
- y to i + -ly
- Prefixes - a-, un-

STRUCTURE:
- Abbreviations - Dr., Sat.
- Contraction - I've
- Possessive - mother's

DICTATION: bomb, brought, charge, fudge, knit, point, quake, shore, taught, wrist

LEVEL 5

Beginning

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /kw/-qu, /n/-kn, /r/-wr
Final - /j/-dge, /z/-se

VOWELS:
Short - /e/-ea, /ô/-augh, /u/-o..e
Long - /ī/-i, /ū/-ew
r-controlled - /ėr/-or
Diphthongs - /oi/-oi, /oi/-oy

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -er, -est
y to i + -es, -ly
Prefix - un-

STRUCTURE:
Pronunciation symbols - /sēt/ /taks/
Abbreviations - lb., Oct., yd.
Special Sets of Words - twelve, Christmas, February, Wednesday
Contractions - here's, she'll, they've

DICTATION: brought, cities, drank, huge, knife, lately, leaves, share, shortest, worry

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS
Initial - /s/-sc
Medial - /f/-ph
Final - /f/-gh, /k/-lk, /n/-gn

VOWELS:
Short - /u/-o
Long - /ē/-ie, /ū/-ou, /ū/-u..e
r-controlled - /ėr/-ear

AFFIXES:
Endings - al, el, le
Prefix - re-

STRUCTURE:
Abbreviations - Ave., Mon.
Homophones - hour/our/are, male/mail, meet/meat, passed/past

DICTATION: crowd, earn, jewel, medical, nothing, refill, rule, soup, sprinkle, trophy

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
Initial - /g/-gh, /j/-g
Medial - /s/-sw
Final - /f/-lf, /v/-ve

VOWELS:
Short - /ô/-au, /u/-ou
Long - /ū/-ui
r-controlled - /ėr/-ear, /ôr/-ore

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -ed, -ion, -less
Doubling + -er
e-dropping + -y
i to y + -ful

STRUCTURE:
Compound words - moonlight, popcorn
Pronunciation symbols - /noiz/, /skil/

DICTATION: believe, careful, cause, champion, clue, dismiss, priceless, suggest, thirsty, touch

LEVEL 6

Beginning

CONSONANTS:
Medial - /ch/-ch, /ch/-tch, /f/-ph
Final - /m/-mb, /s/-ce, /z/-se, /z/-ze

VOWELS:
Short - /ô/-au, /u/-ou
Long - /ū/-u..e, /ū/-ui
r-controlled - /ėr/-ear, /ėr/-er, /ôr/-ore

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -ful
e-dropping + -ion
f to v + -es
y to i + -est
Prefixes - dis-, un-

STRUCTURE:
Homophones - pail/pale, peace/piece, threw/through
Pronunciation symbols - /mil/, /sūn/
Irregular words - again, aunt, friend, minute, ocean

DICTATION: bruise, fearless, energy, healthy, honey, kennel, search, tune, trouble, wonderful

Mid-Year

CONSONANTS:
Medial - /r/-wr
Final - /f/-gh, /j/-ge, /n/-gn, /s/-se

VOWELS:
Short - /ô/-augh, /u/-o
Long - /ū/-ue
r-controlled - /er/-are, /ėr/-er

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -ly
Doubling + -ed
e-dropping + -ion
f to v + -es
y to i + -est

STRUCTURE:
Abbreviations: Co., oz.
Homophones - flew/flu/flue, their/there/they're, write/right

DICTATION: approve, coupon, disloyal, election, laundry, national, nephew, ounce, represent, rough

End-of-Year

CONSONANTS:
Medial - /k/-ch, /s/-st, /sh/-ch, /sh/-ti
Final - /z/-se

VOWELS:
Short - schwa
Long - /ā/-a, /ā/-ei, /ā/-eigh, /ē/-e..e, /ō/-ou, /ū/-u

AFFIXES:
No spelling change + -age, -ance, -ence
Doubling + -ed
e-dropping + -able, -or, -ure
i to y + -ness
Ending -ar
Prefix - in-

STRUCTURE:
Homophones - dough/doe, so/sew/sow, through/threw
Irregular words - calm, height

DICTATION: boulder, chemist, concrete, freight, musical, parachute, patient, station, vein, whistle

PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS IN SPELLING

DIRECTIONS FOR LEVEL 1

General Information

This booklet contains directions for the following PVS Spelling Inventories:

Beginning Inventory—Level 1: for students who are just beginning Grade One spelling instruction.

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 1: for students who have completed the first semester of Grade One spelling instruction.

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 1: for students who have completed Grade One spelling instruction.

Students should be given the inventory that matches the level of spelling materials they are using for instruction, regardless of their grade in school. For example, if Grade Two students are using materials normally used at Grade One, they should take the appropriate Level One inventories.

Preparation for Administration

- Give all students in a test group identical PVS booklets since each inventory is administered orally by a teacher or an aide.

- Make sure each student has a **number 2** lead pencil and an eraser. Pens or crayons cannot be used.

- Have students write their first and last names and their teacher's name on the appropriate lines at the top of the first page. (Some teachers may prefer to complete this information before handing out the booklets.)

- Help students fill in the identification circles at the top of the first page. This information is critical if students' answers are to be scored and reported properly. **It is recommended that Grade One teachers complete this information themselves.**

  1. Have students fill in the circle for their grade in school. (If the school is ungraded, leave this space blank.)

  2. Have students fill in the circles for their first and last initials. (Students should ignore the optional student number. This is provided for teacher convenience and is described below.)

- Tell students that you will read the directions aloud. (Directions begin on page 3.) They will answer each item by filling in the correct answer. Remind them to fill in the entire circle.

- Tell students to erase any answer that they want to change. They must erase it completely since two responses are counted as an incorrect answer.

- Give students ample time to mark their answers. Re-read any item if a student asks you to do so.

- If desired, provide practice items on the board or on ditto sheets prior to administering the inventory. The objective of a practice session is to assist students in following directions.

Copyright 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Checking Students' Materials for Machine Scoring

Teachers should spend a few minutes skimming the materials to see that they are correctly marked.

Be sure that the proper marker was used. If some students have not used a number 2 pencil, have them recopy their answers.

Be sure that the identification information on the front page was completed properly. Students are identified by their initials only. If several students have the same initials, assign numbers to all pupils. Student numbers may be assigned in addition to initials even where there is no problem with pupils having the same initials.

There is a section on the front page to mark a student number. Two digits must be used. For example, if the student's number is 2, code the number "02," by marking a "0" in the first column and a "2" in the second column. (Optional student numbers are usually taken directly from the teacher's classroom roster.)

Be sure that no stray marks are on the pages. Stray marks can interfere with machine scoring and can result in lower scores. If possible, erase all stray marks.

Be sure that the Handwriting or Dictation Section has been scored. Each inventory includes a Handwriting or Dictation Section. Space is provided in each booklet for student responses. Upon completion of the inventory, the teacher must check the items and mark the appropriate scoring circle. Specific scoring directions are provided for each inventory.

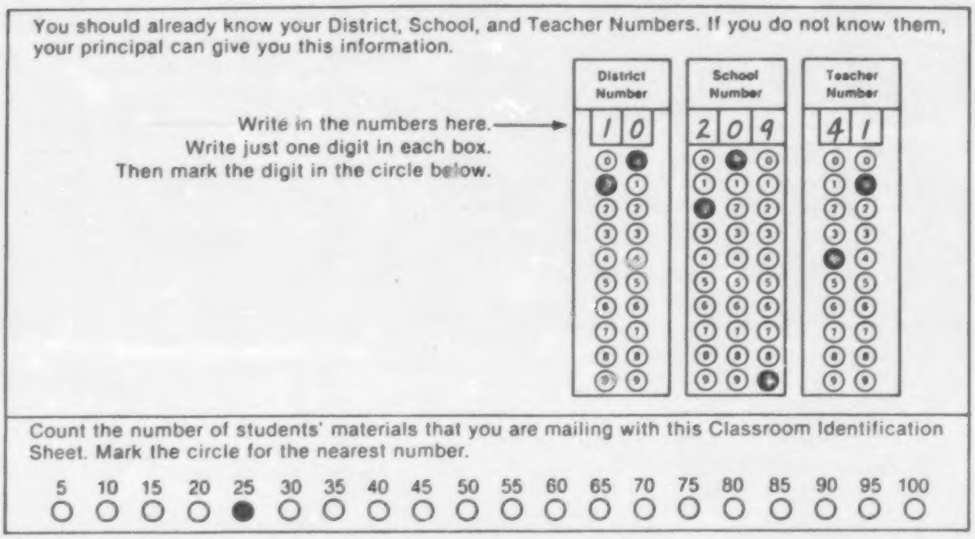
Completing the Classroom Identification Sheet

Read and follow directions on the Classroom Identification Sheet. No materials can be scored or summarized without the proper classroom identification.

- Teachers should already know their permanent District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If they are not known, principals can provide this information. In the course of the school year, teachers are assigned many numbers. Only PVS-assigned codes should be used.

- The example below shows how teachers should mark their Classroom Identification Sheets:

  Mr. Davis has 25 students in his class. His District Number is 10. His School Number is 209. His Teacher Number is 41. Mr. Davis completes the number code portion of his Classroom Identification Sheet accordingly:



You should already know your District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If you do not know them, your principal can give you this information.

Write in the numbers here. →
Write just one digit in each box.
Then mark the digit in the circle below.

District Number		School Number			Teacher Number	
1	0	2	0	9	4	1
⓪	●	⓪	●	⓪	⓪	⓪
●	①	①	①	①	①	●
②	②	●	②	②	②	②
③	③	③	③	③	③	③
④	④	④	④	④	●	④
⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤
⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥
⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦
⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧
⑨	⑨	⑨	⑨	●	⑨	⑨

Count the number of students' materials that you are mailing with this Classroom Identification Sheet. Mark the circle for the nearest number.

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If Mr. Davis submitted this Classroom Identification Sheet with his students' materials, he would receive 25 individual student summaries and a Classroom Profile which summarizes the performance of the entire class.

- Mark the number of students' materials to the nearest 5. (For example, Mr. Davis is submitting 25 students' materials, so the circle under the number 25 is filled in. A teacher who submits 33 students' materials marks the circle under the number 35.)
- Some teachers prefer to receive separate reports for each instructional group. This can be done by simply submitting a separate Classroom Identification Sheet with each group. No special recording is necessary. For example, Ms. Jones has three instructional groups. She fills out three identical Classroom Identification Sheets and places one with each group's materials. Ms. Jones will receive three separate reports. Each report will provide individual student summaries and an overall group profile. By looking at students' initials (and optional student numbers, if used), Ms. Jones can easily associate each report with the proper group.

Always place the completed classroom identification sheet on top of the stack of students' materials.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE BEGINNING INVENTORY—LEVEL 1

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Look at the picture of the **cup**. Think of the sound that you hear at the beginning of **cup**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture **begins** with the same sound that you hear at the beginning of **cup**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Look at Number 2. Look at the picture of the **bed**. Think of the sound that you hear at the beginning of **bed**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture **begins** with the same sound that you hear at the beginning of **bed**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Now we will listen to the sounds at the *ends* of words.

Look at Number 3. Look at the picture of the **sun**. Think of the sound that you hear at the end of **sun**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture ends with the same sound that you hear at the end of **sun**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Look at Number 4. Look at the picture of the **nut**. Think of the sound that you hear at the end of **nut**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture **ends** with the same sound that you hear at the end of **nut**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Now we are going to match some rhyming words.

Look at Number 5. Look at the picture of the **hat**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture rhymes with **hat**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Look at Number 6. Look at the picture of the **rug**. Now look at the two pictures next to it. Which picture rhymes with **rug**? Fill in the circle under the picture.

Now turn to the next page.

Look at Number 7. Look at the first letter. Now look at the letters next to it. Which one is the same as the first letter? Fill in the circle under the letter.

Look at Number 8. Look at the first letter. Now look at the letters next to it. Which one is the same as the first letter? Fill in the circle under the letter.

Look at Number 9. Look at the first letter. Now look at the letters next to it. Which one is the same as the first letter? Fill in the circle under the letter.

Look at Number 10. Look at the first letter. Now look at the letters next to it. Which one is the same as the first letter? Fill in the circle under the letter.

Look at Number 11. Look at the first letter. Now look at the letters next to it. Which one is the same as the first letter? Fill in the circle under the letter.

Look at Number 12. Look at the letters. Which one is the letter **s**? Fill in the circle under the **s**.

Look at Number 13. Look at the letters. Which one is the letter **w**? Fill in the circle under the **w**.

Look at Number 14. Look at the letters. Which one is the letter **g**? Fill in the circle under the **g**.

Now turn to the next page.

Look at Number 15. Look at the letters. Which one is the letter **m**? Fill in the circle under the **m**.

Look at Number 16. Look at the letters. Which one is the letter **d**? Fill in the circle under the **d**.

Now turn to the next page.

Look at Number 17. Look at the letter **s**. Next to the letter **s** you will see a place for you to copy this letter. Use your best printing to copy the letter.

Now look at the rest of the letters on this page. Next to each letter is a place for you to copy that letter. Use your best printing to copy each letter. Take your time and do a good job. When you are finished, put your pencil down and I will collect your booklet. You may begin.

Directions for Scoring the Handwriting Section

The Handwriting section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 17-21) is followed by three scoring circles, labeled **Good, Acceptable,** and **Unacceptable**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item:

Good — The response approximates the model in size and in stroke formation.

Acceptable — The response is legible, but differs from the model in size or stroke formation.

Unacceptable — The response is illegible or difficult to read, or no response was attempted.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MID-YEAR INVENTORY—LEVEL 1

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Which letter begins the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the page by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that begins each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

(Circulate around the class to make sure that students understand the directions.)

Now turn the page.

Look at Number 8. Which letter finishes the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the page by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that finishes each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Now turn the page.

Look at Number 13. Which letter goes in the middle of the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Do the rest of the page by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that goes in the middle of each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

You may turn the page.

Now you are going to write some words. I will say the word and use it in a sentence. Write only the word that I tell you to write.

On line 18, write the word **fun**. The children had **fun** at the park. **Fun.**

On line 19, write the word **big**. The giant was very **big**. **Big.**

On line 20, write the word **wet**. When it rained, Bill got **wet**. **Wet.**

On line 21, write the word **job**. Mother works hard at her **job**. **Job.**

On line 22, write the word **ran**. The girl **ran** very fast. **Ran.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 18-22) is followed by two scoring circles, labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE END-OF-YEAR INVENTORY—LEVEL 1

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Which letter begins the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the page by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that begins each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

(Circulate around the class to make sure that students understand the directions.)

Now turn the page.

Look at Number 7. Which letter finishes the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do numbers 8, 9, and 10 by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that finishes each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Look at Number 11. Which letter goes in the middle of the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Do numbers 12, 13, 14, and 15 by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letter that goes in the middle of the word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Look at Number 16. Which letters finish the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do numbers 17 and 18 by yourself. Fill in the circle under the letters that finish each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Turn the page.

Now you are going to write some words. I will say the word and use it in a sentence. Write only the word that I tell you to write.

On line 19, write the word **sat**. Linda **sat** on the chair. **Sat.**

On line 20, write the word **like**. Most children **like** ice cream. **Like.**

On line 21, write the word **dig**. We will need a shovel to **dig** a hole. **Dig.**

On line 22, write the word **home**. Does your sister live at **home**? **Home.**

On line 23, write the word **cut**. Use the knife to **cut** the cake. **Cut.**

On line 24, write the word **save**. John wants to **save** his money. **Save.**

On line 25, write the word **fed**. Mary **fed** the dog last night. **Fed.**

On line 26, write the word **hot**. The sun is very **hot**. **Hot.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 19-26) is followed by two scoring circles, labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

SWRL

PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS IN SPELLING

DIRECTIONS FOR LEVEL 2

General Information

This booklet contains directions for the following PVS Spelling Inventories:

Beginning Inventory—Level 2: for students who are just beginning Grade Two spelling instruction.

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 2: for students who have completed the first semester of Grade Two spelling instruction.

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 2: for students who have completed Grade Two spelling instruction.

Students should be given the inventory that matches the level of spelling materials they are using for instruction, regardless of their grade in school. For example, if Grade Two students are using materials normally used at Grade One, they should take the appropriate Level One inventories.

Preparation for Administration

- Give all students in a test group identical PVS booklets since each inventory is administered orally by a teacher or an aide.
- Make sure each student has a **number 2** lead pencil and an eraser. Pens or crayons cannot be used.
- Have students write their first and last names and their teacher's name on the appropriate lines at the top of the first page. (Some teachers may prefer to complete this information before handing out the booklets.)
- Help students fill in the identification circles at the top of the first page. This information is critical if students' answers are to be scored and reported properly. **It is recommended that Grade One teachers complete this information themselves.**

  1. Have students fill in the circle for their grade in school. (If the school is ungraded, leave this space blank.)
  2. Have students fill in the circles for their first and last initials. (Students should ignore the optional student number. This is provided for teacher convenience and is described below.)

- Tell students that you will read the directions aloud. (Directions begin on page 3.) They will answer each item by filling in the correct answer. Remind them to fill in the entire circle.
- Tell students to erase any answer that they want to change. They must erase it completely since two responses are counted as an incorrect answer.
- Give students ample time to mark their answers. Re-read any item if a student asks you to do so.
- If desired, provide practice items on the board or on ditto sheets prior to administering the inventory. The objective of a practice session is to assist students in following directions.

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Checking Students' Materials for Machine Scoring

Teachers should spend a few minutes skimming the materials to see that they are correctly marked.

Be sure that the proper marker was used. If some students have not used a number 2 pencil, have them recopy their answers.

Be sure that the identification information on the front page was completed properly. Students are identified by their initials only. If several students have the same initials, assign numbers to all pupils. Student numbers may be assigned in addition to initials even where there is no problem with pupils having the same initials.

There is a section on the front page to mark a student number. Two digits must be used. For example, if the student's number is 2, code the number "02," by marking a "0" in the first column and a "2" in the second column. (Optional student numbers are usually taken directly from the teacher's classroom roster.)

Be sure that no stray marks are on the pages. Stray marks can interfere with machine scoring and can result in lower scores. If possible, erase all stray marks.

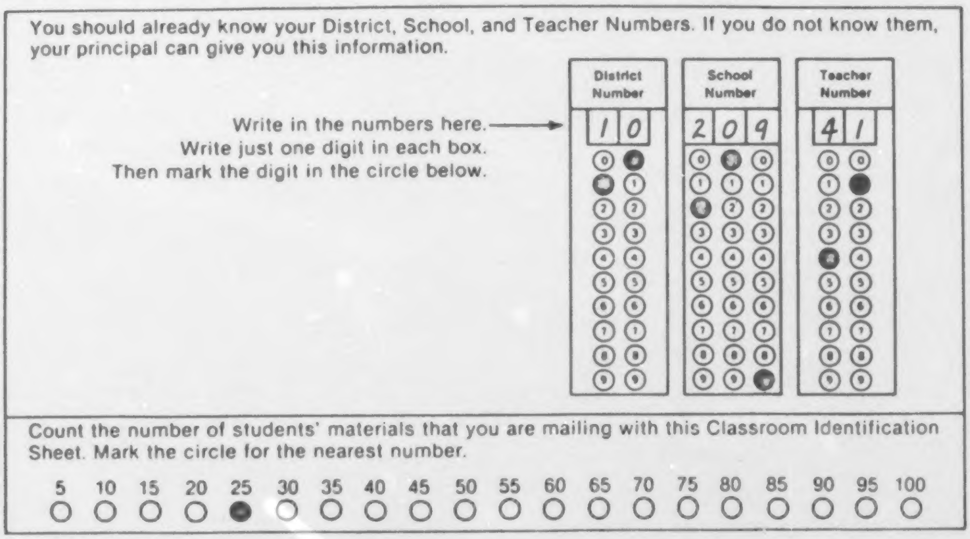
Be sure that the Dictation Section has been scored. Each inventory includes a list of words to be dictated to the students. Space is provided in each booklet for student responses. Upon completion of the inventory, the teacher must check the dictated items and mark the appropriate scoring circle. Specific scoring directions are provided for each inventory.

Completing the Classroom Identification Sheet

Read and follow directions on the Classroom Identification Sheet. No materials can be scored or summarized without the proper classroom identification.

- Teachers should already know their permanent District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If they are not known, principals can provide this information. In the course of the school year, teachers are assigned many numbers. Only PVS-assigned codes should be used.
- The example below shows how teachers should mark their Classroom Identification Sheets:

Mr. Davis has 25 students in his class. His District Number is 10. His School Number is 209. His Teacher Number is 41. Mr. Davis completes the number code portion of his Classroom Identification Sheet accordingly:



You should already know your District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If you do not know them, your principal can give you this information.

Write in the numbers here. →
Write just one digit in each box.
Then mark the digit in the circle below.

District Number		School Number			Teacher Number	
1	0	2	0	9	4	1
○	●	○	●	○	○	○
●	○	○	○	○	○	●
○	○	●	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	●	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	●	○	○

Count the number of students' materials that you are mailing with this Classroom Identification Sheet. Mark the circle for the nearest number.

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If Mr. Davis submitted this Classroom Identification Sheet with his students' materials, he would receive 25 individual student summaries and a Classroom Profile which summarizes the performance of the entire class.

- Mark the number of students' materials to the nearest 5. (For example, Mr. Davis is submitting 25 students' materials, so the circle under the number 25 is filled in. A teacher who submits 33 students' materials marks the circle under the number 35.)
- Some teachers prefer to receive separate reports for each instructional group. This can be done by simply submitting a separate Classroom Identification Sheet with each group. No special recording is necessary. For example, Ms. Jones has three instructional groups. She fills out three identical Classroom Identification Sheets and places one with each group's materials. Ms. Jones will receive three separate reports. Each report will provide individual student summaries and an overall group profile. By looking at students' initials (and optional student numbers, if used), Ms. Jones can easily associate each report with the proper group.

Always place the completed classroom identification sheet on top of the stack of students' materials.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE BEGINNING INVENTORY—LEVEL 2

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Which letter begins the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the next nine items by yourselves. Fill in the circle under the letter that begins each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

(Circulate around the class to make sure that students understand the directions.)

Look at Number 11. Which letter finishes the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the page by yourselves. Fill in the circle under the letter that finishes each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Turn the page.

Look at Number 16. Which letter goes in the middle of the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the page by yourselves. Fill in the circle under the letter that goes in the middle of each word. When you see the stop sign, put your pencil down.

Turn the page.

Now you are going to write some words. I will say the word and use it in a sentence. Write only the word that I tell you to write.

On line 21, write the word **run**. How fast can you **run**? **Run.**

On line 22, write the word **pet**. John has a **pet** rabbit. **Pet.**

On line 23, write the word **top**. The glass is on the **top** shelf. **Top.**

On line 24, write the word **had**. The children **had** a good time. **Had.**

On line 25, write the word **win**. Our team will **win** the game. **Win.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 21-25) in this section is followed by two scoring circles. The circles are labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item by applying the following criteria:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE MID-YEAR INVENTORY—LEVEL 2

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Which letter begins the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of these items by yourselves. Each word is missing one or more letters. In some words, the first letter is missing. In some other words, the middle of the word or the end of the word is missing. Look at each word carefully and then fill in the circle under the answer. Keep working until you see the stop sign; then put your pencil down.

(Circulate around the class to make sure that students understand the directions. Students are to continue working until they complete item 23.)

Now turn the page.

Now you are going to write some words. I will say the word and use it in a sentence. Write only the word that I tell you to write.

On line 24, write the word **gum**. Alice bought some **gum** at the store. **Gum.**

On line 25, write the word **hill**. We walked to the top of the **hill**. **Hill.**

On line 26, write the word **joke**. I laughed when Alex told a **joke**. **Joke.**

On line 27, write the word **feed**. Ralph likes to **feed** the birds. **Feed.**

On line 28, write the word **pop**. I didn't mean to **pop** the balloon. **Pop.**

On line 29, write the word **ride**. Would you like to **ride** my bike? **Ride.**

On line 30, write the word **sad**. Mary told us a **sad** story. **Sad.**

On line 31, write the word **web**. The spider is spinning a **web**. **Web.**

On line 32, write the word **bake**. Shall we **bake** some cookies? **Bake.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 24-32) in this section is followed by two scoring circles. The circles are labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item by applying the following criteria:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE END-OF-YEAR INVENTORY—LEVEL 2

TEACHER:

Look at Number 1. Which letter or letters complete the word? Fill in the circle under the answer.

Now do the rest of the items by yourselves. Each word is missing one or more letters. In some words, the missing part is at the end of the word; in other words, the missing part is at the beginning of the word. Look at each word carefully and fill in the circle under the answer. Keep working until you see the stop sign; then put your pencil down. You may begin.

(Circulate around the class to make sure that students understand the directions. Students are to continue working until they complete item 22.)

Now turn the page.

Now you are going to write some words. I will say the word and use it in a sentence. Write only the word that I tell you to write.

On line 23, write the word **rain**. I think it will **rain** today. **Rain.**

On line 24, write the word **town**. John is moving to another **town**. **Town.**

On line 25, write the word **broom**. Use the **broom** to sweep the floor. **Broom.**

On line 26, write the word **drive**. My brother can **drive** a car. **Drive.**

On line 27, write the word **cook**. What shall we **cook** for dinner? **Cook.**

On line 28, write the word **read**. Elena likes to **read** animal stories. **Read.**

On line 29, write the word **soap**. Wash your hands with **soap** and water. **Soap.**

On line 30, write the word **sweet**. This candy is very **sweet**. **Sweet.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item (numbers 23-30) in this section is followed by two scoring circles. The circles are labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item by applying the following criteria:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS IN SPELLING

DIRECTIONS FOR LEVEL 3

General Information

This booklet contains directions for the following PVS Spelling Inventories:

Beginning Inventory—Level 3: for students who are just beginning Grade Three spelling instruction.

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 3: for students who have completed the first semester of Grade Three spelling instruction.

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 3: for students who have completed Grade Three spelling instruction.

Students should be given the inventory that matches the level of spelling materials they are using for instruction, regardless of their grade in school. For example, if Grade Three students are using materials normally used at Grade Two, they should take the appropriate Grade Two inventories.

Preparation for Administration

- Give all students in a test group identical PVS booklets.
- Make sure each student has a **number 2** lead pencil and an eraser. Pens or crayons cannot be used.
- Have students write their first and last names and their teacher's name on the appropriate lines at the top of the first page. (Some teachers may prefer to complete this information before handing out the booklets.)
- Help students fill in the identification circles at the top of the first page. This information is critical if students' answers are to be scored and reported properly. Again, some teachers may wish to complete this information themselves.

  1. Have students fill in the circle for their grade in school. (If the school is ungraded, leave this space blank.)
  2. Have students fill in the circles for their first and last initials. (Students should ignore the optional student number. This is provided for teacher convenience and is described below.)

- Tell students that they are to read the directions for each item and then fill in the circle for the correct answer.
- Tell students to erase any answer that they want to change. They must erase it completely since two responses are counted as an incorrect answer.
- Give students ample time to mark their answers.
- If desired, provide practice items on the board or on ditto sheets prior to administering the inventory. The objective of a practice session is to assist students in following directions.

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Checking Students' Materials for Machine Scoring

Teachers should spend a few minutes skimming the materials to see that they are correctly marked.

Be sure that the proper marker was used. If some students have not used a number 2 pencil, have them recopy their answers.

Be sure that the identification information on the front page was completed properly. Students are identified by their initials only. If several students have the same initials, assign numbers to all pupils. Student numbers may be assigned in addition to initials even where there is no problem with pupils having the same initials.

There is a section on the front page to mark a student number. Two digits must be used. For example, if the student's number is 2, code the number "02," by marking a "0" in the first column and a "2" in the second column. (Optional student numbers are usually taken directly from the teacher's classroom roster.)

Be sure that no stray marks are on the pages. Stray marks can interfere with machine scoring and can result in lower scores. If possible, erase all stray marks.

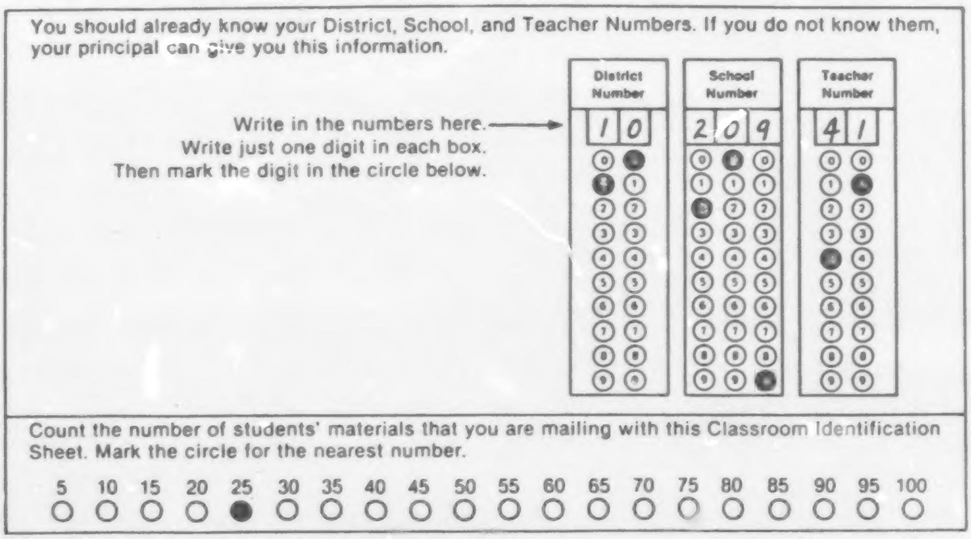
Be sure that the Dictation Section has been scored. Each inventory includes a list of words to be dictated to the students. Space is provided in each booklet for student responses. Upon completion of the inventory, the teacher must check the dictated items and mark the appropriate scoring circle. Specific scoring directions are provided for each inventory.

Completing the Classroom Identification Sheet

Read and follow directions on the Classroom Identification Sheet. No materials can be scored or summarized without the proper classroom identification.

- Teachers should already know their permanent District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If they are not known, principals can provide this information. In the course of the school year, teachers are assigned many numbers. Only PVS-assigned codes should be used.
- The example below shows how teachers should mark their Classroom Identification Sheets:

Mr. Davis has 25 students in his class. His District Number is 10. His School Number is 209. His Teacher Number is 41. Mr. Davis completes the number code portion of his Classroom Identification Sheet accordingly:



You should already know your District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If you do not know them, your principal can give you this information.

Write in the numbers here. →
Write just one digit in each box.
Then mark the digit in the circle below.

District Number		School Number			Teacher Number	
1	0	2	0	9	4	1
0	●	0	●	0	0	0
●	1	1	1	1	1	●
2	2	●	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	●	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	●	9	9

Count the number of students' materials that you are mailing with this Classroom Identification Sheet. Mark the circle for the nearest number.

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If Mr. Davis submitted this Classroom Identification Sheet with his students' materials, he would receive 25 individual student summaries and a Classroom Profile which summarizes the performance of the entire class.

- Mark the number of students' materials to the nearest 5. (For example, Mr. Davis is submitting 25 students' materials, so the circle under the number 25 is filled in. A teacher who submits 33 students' materials marks the circle under the number 35.)
- Some teachers prefer to receive separate reports for each instructional group. This can be done by simply submitting a separate Classroom Identification Sheet with each group. No special recording is necessary. For example, Ms. Jones has three instructional groups. She fills out three identical Classroom Identification Sheets and places one with each group's materials. Ms. Jones will receive three separate reports. Each report will provide individual student summaries and an overall group profile. By looking at students' initials (and optional student numbers, if used), Ms. Jones can easily associate each report with the proper group.

Always place the completed classroom identification sheet on top of the stack of students' materials.

Directions for Administering the Dictation Section

When all students have completed the multiple-choice sections of the inventory, have them turn to the Dictation Section on page 4. Dictate the applicable words as indicated below:

Dictation—Beginning Inventory

TEACHER:

On line 21, write the word **rain**. Mike is walking in the **rain**. **Rain.**

On line 22, write the word **lunch**. María will eat her **lunch**. **Lunch.**

On line 23, write the word **wood**. Put some **wood** on the fire. **Wood.**

On line 24, write the word **bath**. John will give the dog a **bath**. **Bath.**

On line 25, write the word **why**. I wonder **why** Alice isn't here. **Why.**

On line 26, write the word **prize**. Patricia won the first **prize**. **Prize.**

On line 27, write the word **bring**. What did you **bring** to the picnic? **Bring.**

Dictation—Mid-Year Inventory

On line 21, write the word **pitch**. Gloria will **pitch** the ball. **Pitch.**

On line 22, write the word **stiff**. My arm is sore and **stiff**. **Stiff.**

On line 23, write the word **march**. The band will **march** in the parade. **March.**

On line 24, write the word **burn**. Do you think this wood will **burn**? **Burn.**

On line 25, write the word **small**. One cat is large. The other is **small**. **Small.**

On line 26, write the word **shirt**. Tom is wearing a new **shirt**. **Shirt.**

On line 27, write the word **die**. Water the flowers before they **die**. **Die.**

On line 28, write the word **send**. Did you **send** the package? **Send.**

Dictation—End-of-Year Inventory

On line 20, write the word **pull**. Help me **pull** the wagon. **Pull.**

On line 21, write the word **cents**. John has ten **cents** to spend. **Cents.**

On line 22, write the word **lawn**. Did you mow the front **lawn**? **Lawn.**

On line 23, write the word **tight**. These shoes are too **tight**. **Tight.**

On line 24, write the word **hair**. Comb your **hair** before you leave. **Hair.**

On line 25, write the word **chance**. Linda has a **chance** to win. **Chance.**

On line 26, write the word **clear**. The water was cool and **clear**. **Clear.**

On line 27, write the word **tear**. Do not **tear** the paper. **Tear.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item in this section is followed by two scoring circles. The circles are labeled **Correct** and **Incorrect**. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item by applying the following criteria:

Correct — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Incorrect — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

SWRL

PROFICIENCY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS IN SPELLING

DIRECTIONS FOR LEVELS 4, 5, AND 6

General Information

This booklet contains directions for all PVS Spelling inventories at Levels 4, 5, and 6. Each level has a Beginning Inventory, a Mid-Year Inventory, and an End-of-Year Inventory.

Students should be given the inventory that matches the level of spelling materials that they are using for instruction, regardless of their grade in school. For example, if Grade Five students are using materials normally used at Grade Four, they should take the appropriate Level Four inventories.

Preparation for Administration

- Give each student a PVS booklet and an answer sheet.
- Make sure each student has a number 2 lead pencil and an eraser. Pens cannot be used.
- Have students write their first and last names and their teacher's name on the appropriate lines at the top of the answer sheet.
- Help students fill in the identification circles at the top of the answer sheet. This information is critical if students' answers are to be scored and reported properly.
    1. Have students fill in the circle for their grade in school. (If the school is ungraded, leave this space blank.)
    2. Have students fill in the circle for the level number of the PVS Inventory they are about to take.
    3. Have students fill in the circle that indicates the type of inventory they are about to take (i.e., Beginning, Mid-Year, or End-of-Year).
    4. Have students fill in the circles for their first and last initials. (Students should ignore the optional student number. This is provided for teacher convenience and is described below.)
- Tell students that all answers must be marked on the answer sheet. They should be very careful to mark their answers in the right place on the answer sheet. Remind them to fill in the entire circle.
- Tell students to erase any answer that they want to change. They must erase it completely since two responses are counted as an incorrect answer.
- Give students ample time to mark their answers.
- If desired, provide practice items on the board or on ditto sheets prior to administering the inventory. However, be careful to avoid the actual content of the inventory. The objective of a practice session is to assist students in following directions.

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Checking Students' Materials for Machine Scoring

Teachers should spend a few minutes skimming the materials to see that they are correctly marked.

Be sure that the proper marker was used. If some students have not used a number 2 pencil, have them recopy their answers.

Be sure that the identification information was completed properly. Students are identified by their initials only. If several students have the same initials, assign numbers to all pupils. Student numbers may be assigned in addition to initials even where there is no problem with pupils having the same initials.

There is a section on the answer sheet to mark a student number. Two digits must be used. For example, if the student's number is 2, code the number "02," by marking a "0" in the first column and a "2" in the second column. (Optional student numbers are usually taken directly from the teacher's classroom roster.)

Be sure that no stray marks are on the answer sheet. Stray marks can interfere with machine scoring and can result in lower scores. If possible, erase all stray marks.

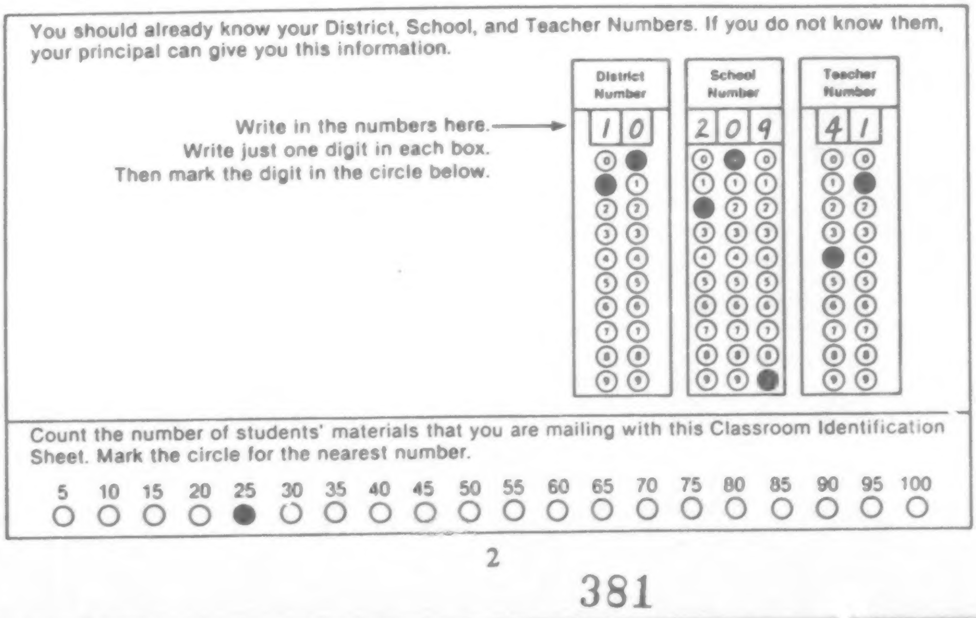
Be sure that the Dictation Section has been scored. Each inventory includes a list of words to be dictated to the students. Space is provided on the answer sheet for student responses. Upon completion of the inventory, the teacher must check the dictated items and mark the appropriate scoring circle. Specific scoring directions are provided for each inventory.

Completing the Classroom Identification Sheet

Read and follow directions on the Classroom Identification Sheet. No answer sheets can be scored or summarized without the proper classroom identification.

- Teachers should already know their permanent District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If they are not known, principals can provide this information. In the course of the school year, teachers are assigned many numbers. Only PVS-assigned codes should be used.
- The example below shows how teachers should mark their Classroom Identification Sheets:

Mr. Davis has 25 students in his class. His District Number is 10. His School Number is 209. His Teacher Number is 41. Mr. Davis completes the number code portion of his Classroom Identification Sheet accordingly:



You should already know your District, School, and Teacher Numbers. If you do not know them, your principal can give you this information.

Write in the numbers here.
Write just one digit in each box.
Then mark the digit in the circle below.

District Number	School Number	Teacher Number
1 0	2 0 9	4 1

Count the number of students' materials that you are mailing with this Classroom Identification Sheet. Mark the circle for the nearest number.

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

If Mr. Davis submitted this Classroom Identification Sheet with his students' answer sheets, he would receive 25 individual student summaries and a Classroom Profile which summarizes the performance of the entire class.

- Mark the number of answer sheets to the nearest 5. (For example, Mr. Davis is submitting 25 answer sheets, so the circle under the number 25 is filled in. A teacher who submits 33 answer sheets marks the circle under the number 35.)
- Some teachers prefer to receive separate reports for each instructional group. This can be done by simply submitting a separate Classroom Identification Sheet with each group. No special recording is necessary. For example, Ms. Jones has three instructional groups. She fills out three identical Classroom Identification Sheets and places one with each group's answer sheets. Ms. Jones will receive three separate reports. Each report will provide individual student summaries and an overall group profile. By looking at students' initials (and optional student numbers, if used), Ms. Jones can easily associate each report with the proper group.

Always place the completed classroom identification sheet on top of the stack of students' answer sheets.

Directions for Administering the Dictation Section

When all students have completed the multiple-choice sections of the inventory, help them locate the **Dictation** section on their answer sheets. The dictated words are to be written on the appropriate, alphabetically ordered lines. Dictate the applicable words as indicated below:

LEVEL 4

Beginning Inventory *(Level 4)*

TEACHER:

On line A, write **bright**. The sun is very **bright. Bright.**

On line B, write **match**. Use a **match** to light the fire. **Match.**

On line C, write **nice**. Isabel has a **nice** voice. **Nice.**

On line D, write **storm**. It rained during the **storm. Storm.**

On line E, write **city**. Los Angeles is a large **city. City.**

On line F, write **ground**. The seeds fell to the **ground. Ground.**

On line G, write **near**. Don't stand **near** the edge. **Near.**

On line H, write **scare**. Did the movie **scare** you? **Scare.**

Mid-Year Inventory *(Level 4)*

TEACHER:

On line A, write **world**. The space craft flew around the **world. World**

On line B, write **health**. Exercise is important to your **health. Health.**

On line C, write **thief**. The officers caught the **thief. Thief.**

On line D, write **sink**. A heavy object will **sink** in water. **Sink.**

On line E, write **child**. Mr. and Mrs. Brown have one **child. Child.**

On line F, write **third**. My brother is in the **third** grade. **Third.**

On line G, write **fault**. The accident wasn't anyone's **fault. Fault.**

On line H, write **bounce**. This ball won't **bounce. Bounce.**

On line I, write **earn**. How much money did you **earn? Earn.**

On line J, write **scratch**. A cat can **scratch** with its claws. **Scratch.**

End-of-Year Inventory *(Level 4)*

TEACHER:

On line A, write **fudge**. Ralph loves to eat chocolate **fudge. Fudge.**

On line B, write **wrist**. Your **wrist** is part of your arm. **Wrist.**

On line C, write **quake**. Did you feel the ground **quake? Quake.**

On line D, write **knit**. I would like to **knit** a sweater. **Knit.**

On line E, write **bomb**. The army tested a large **bomb** in the desert. **Bomb.**

On line F, write **charge**. General Lee led the **charge. Charge.**

On line G, write **taught**. My sister **taught** me how to swim. **Taught.**

On line H, write **shore**. The sea gulls landed on the **shore. Shore.**

On line I, write **point**. A needle has a sharp **point. Point.**

On line J, write **bought**. Amy **bought** a gift with her own money. **Bought.**

LEVEL 5

Beginning Inventory *(Level 5)*

TEACHER:

On line A, write **huge**. An elephant is a **huge** animal. **Huge.**

On line B, write **drank**. The thirsty dog **drank** some water. **Drank.**

On line C, write **knife**. Use a **knife** to cut the cake. **Knife.**

On line D, write **brought**. Daniel **brought** his lunch with him. **Brought.**

On line E, write **worry**. Try not to **worry** about the game. **Worry.**

On line F, write **leaves**. The **leaves** fell off the tree. **Leaves.**

On line G, write **cities**. We visited three different **cities**. **Cities.**

On line H, write **shortest**. Jim is the **shortest** boy in his class. **Shortest.**

On line I, write **lately**. Have you been to the show **lately**? **Lately.**

On line J, write **share**. The children will **share** the candy. **Share.**

Mid-Year Inventory ***(Level 5)***

TEACHER:

On line A, write **crowd**. A large **crowd** of people watched the show. **Crowd.**

On line B, write **trophy**. The winner will receive a large **trophy**. **Trophy.**

On line C, write **nothing**. Eddie was sure that **nothing** would happen. **Nothing.**

On line D, write **rule**. How long did they **rule** the country? **Rule.**

On line E, write **soup**. Let's have some **soup** for lunch. **Soup.**

On line F, write **earn**. How much money did you **earn**? **Earn.**

On line G, write **refill**. Please **refill** my glass with water. **Refill.**

On line H, write **jewel**. This **jewel** is worth a lot of money. **Jewel.**

On line I, write **medical**. Sick people often need **medical** treatment. **Medical.**

On line J, write **sprinkle**. Did you feel a **sprinkle** of rain? **Sprinkle.**

End-of-Year Inventory ***(Level 5)***

TEACHER:

On line A, write **suggest**. I **suggest** that you do your best. **Suggest.**

On line B, write **cause**. Emily always supports a worthy **cause**. **Cause.**

On line C, write **touch**. The runner must **touch** every base. **Touch.**

On line D, write **clue**. The detectives are searching for a **clue**. **Clue.**

On line E, write **dismiss**. The teacher will **dismiss** the class. **Dismiss.**

On line F, write **careful**. Be **careful** when you cross the street. **Careful.**

On line G, write **champion**. Citation was a **champion** race-horse. **Champion.**

On line H, write **priceless**. Mr. Jones has a **priceless** diamond. **Priceless.**

On line I, write **thirsty**. All the players were tired and **thirsty**. **Thirsty.**

On line J, write **believe**. Miguel doesn't **believe** in ghosts. **Believe.**

LEVEL 6

Beginning Inventory ***(Level 6)***

TEACHER:

On line A, write **honey**. Most bears like to eat **honey**. **Honey.**

On line B, write **tune**. Do you know the words to that **tune**? **Tune.**

On line C, write **search**. Help me **search** for my missing watch. **Search.**

On line D, write **kennel**. The **kennel** has many dogs and cats. **Kennel.**

On line E, write **trouble**. Did you have **trouble** with your homework? **Trouble.**

On line F, write **energy**. The sun is a good source of **energy**. **Energy**

On line G, write **bruise**. I have a **bruise** where I bumped my knee. **Bruise.**

On line H, write **wonderful**. Everyone had a **wonderful** time. **Wonderful.**

On line I, write **fearless**. The lion is a brave and **fearless** animal. **Fearless.**

On line J, write **healthy**. Exercise helps us stay **healthy**. **Healthy.**

Mid-Year Inventory ***(Level 6)***

TEACHER:

On line A, write **ounce**. The recipe calls for one **ounce** of milk. **Ounce.**

On line B, write **nephew**. Mrs. García has a niece and **nephew**. **Nephew.**

On line C, write **coupon**. Joyce has a **coupon** for a free hamburger. **Coupon.**

On line D, write **represent**. Will you **represent** our school? **Represent.**

On line E, write **national**. George Washington was a **national** hero. **National.**

On line F, write **laundry**. Tomorrow we must wash the **laundry**. **Laundry.**

On line G, write **rough**. The wood was too **rough** to carve. **Rough.**

On line H, write **disloyal**. The spy was **disloyal** to his country. **Disloyal.**

On line I, write **election**. Did you vote in the class **election? Election.**

On line J, write **approve**. I hope you **approve** of my choice. **Approve.**

End-of-Year Inventory *(Level 6)*

TEACHER:

On line A, write **chemist**. John's mother is a **chemist. Chemist.**

On line B, write **whistle**. Dogs can hear a very shrill **whistle. Whistle.**

On line C, write **parachute**. The **parachute** floated to the ground. **Parachute.**

On line D, write **patient**. The doctor took care of the **patient. Patient.**

On line E, write **station**. Do you have a favorite radio **station? Station.**

On line F, write **vein. A vein** carries blood through your body. **Vein.**

On line G, write **freight**. The truck was loaded with **freight. Freight.**

On line H, write **concrete**. Most sidewalks are made of **concrete. Concrete.**

On line I, write **boulder**. A large **boulder** rolled down the mountain. **Boulder.**

On line J, write **musical**. Teresa has a lot of **musical** talent. **Musical.**

Directions for Scoring the Dictation Section

The Dictation Section must be scored by the teacher. Each item in this section is followed by two scoring circles. The circles are labeled **R** for *Right* and **W** for *Wrong*. Using a **number 2** lead pencil, fill in the appropriate circle for each item by applying the following criteria:

Right (R) — The word is spelled correctly. (Do not penalize students for the use of capital letters.)

Wrong (W) — The word is spelled incorrectly, or no response was attempted.

PVS SPELLING INVENTORY
Answer Sheet

NAME ______________________

TEACHER ______________________

What grade are you in? Mark the grade number here. ▶ ①②③④⑤⑥⑦⑧

Look at the level number at the top of your test booklet. Mark the level here. ▶ ④⑤⑥

Mark the type of inventory you are taking here. ▶
Beginning Ⓐ
Mid-Year Ⓑ
End-of-Year Ⓒ

Mark your first initial. ▶	ⒶⒷⒸⒹⒺⒻⒼⒽⒾⒿⓀⓁⓂⓃⓄⓅⓆⓇⓈⓉⓊⓋⓌⓍⓎⓏ
Mark your last initial. ▶	ⒶⒷⒸⒹⒺⒻⒼⒽⒾⒿⓀⓁⓂⓃⓄⓅⓆⓇⓈⓉⓊⓋⓌⓍⓎⓏ

OPTIONAL PUPIL NO.	
⓪	⓪
①	①
②	②
③	③
④	④
⑤	⑤
⑥	⑥
⑦	⑦
⑧	⑧
⑨	⑨

Mark your test answers below. Be sure you mark your answers from top to bottom. Just mark one answer for each question.

1 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	17 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
2 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	18 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
3 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	19 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
4 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	20 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
5 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	21 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
6 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	22 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
7 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	23 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
8 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	24 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
9 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	25 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
10 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	26 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
11 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	27 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
12 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	28 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
13 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	29 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
14 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	30 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ
15 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ	31 ⒶⒷⒸⒹ
16 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ	32 ⒺⒻⒼⒽ

DICTATION	TEACHER ONLY
A. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
B. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
C. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
D. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
E. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
F. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
G. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
H. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
I. ______________________	ⓇⓌ
J. ______________________	ⓇⓌ

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Teacher ____________________

School ____________________

District ____________________

CLASSROOM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

- No materials can be scored or summarized without a Classroom Identification Sheet.
- Be very careful to provide the correct identification numbers. If a classroom is identified incorrectly, a teacher may not receive a classroom report.
- Place a completed identification sheet on TOP OF ALL PUPIL MATERIALS THAT ARE MAILED.
- If you are not sure how to mark the number codes, see the PVS directions pamphlet.

USE A NUMBER 2 PENCIL ONLY

You should already know your district, school, and teacher numbers. If you do not know them, your principal can give you this information. See the PVS directions pamphlet for the instructional program code numbers.

Write in the numbers here. →
Write just one digit in each box.
Then mark the digit in the circle below.

District Number		School Number			Teacher Number	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
⓪	⓪	⓪	⓪	⓪	⓪	⓪
①	①	①	①	①	①	①
②	②	②	②	②	②	②
③	③	③	③	③	③	③
④	④	④	④	④	④	④
⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤	⑤
⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥	⑥
⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦	⑦
⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧	⑧
⑨	⑨	⑨	⑨	⑨	⑨	⑨

Count the number of pupils' materials that you are mailing with this Classroom Identification Sheet. Mark the circle for the nearest number.

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

PVS SPELLING—BEGINNING INVENTORY: LEVEL 1

SWRL

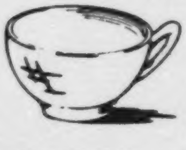
NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

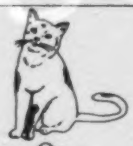
First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	● ② ③
Form	● Ⓑ Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨

Grade		
①	②	③
④	⑤	⑥

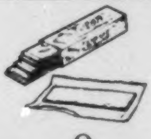
SOUND DISCRIMINATION

1.



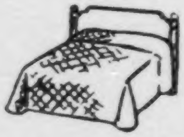


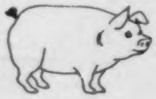
0



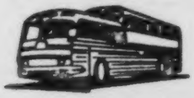
0

2.



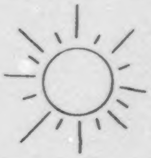


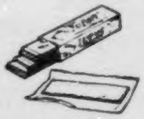
0



0

3.



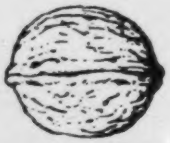


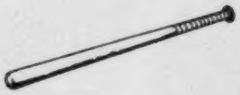
0

10

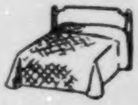
0

4.



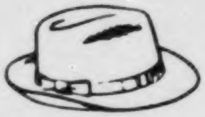


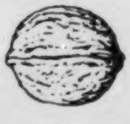
0



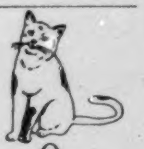
0

5.



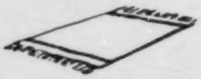


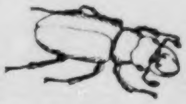
0



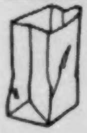
0

6.





0



0

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

7.	c	e ○	o ○	c ○
8.	h	h ○	n ○	b ○
9.	u	n ○	u ○	m ○
10.	j	i ○	j ○	g ○
11.	b	p ○	d ○	b ○

LETTER RECOGNITION

12.	z ○	s ○	c ○
13.	w ○	u ○	v ○
14.	g ○	j ○	y ○

15.

m	n	w
○	○	○

16.

d	p	b
○	○	○

HANDWRITING

17. s

Good ○ Acceptable ○ Unacceptable ○

18. d

Good ○ Acceptable ○ Unacceptable ○

19. m

Good ○ Acceptable ○ Unacceptable ○

20. k

Good ○ Acceptable ○ Unacceptable ○

21. e

Good ○ Acceptable ○ Unacceptable ○

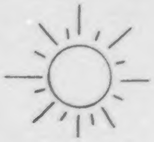
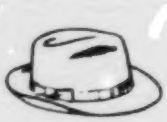
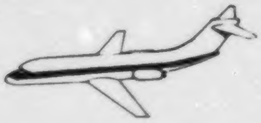
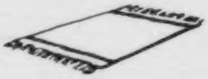
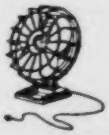
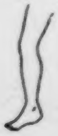
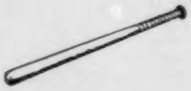
PVS SPELLING—MID-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 1

SWRL

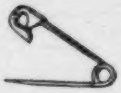
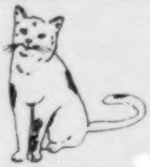
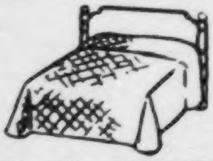
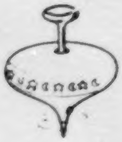
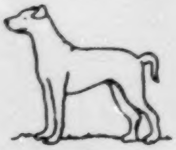
NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	● ② ③
Form	Ⓐ ● Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

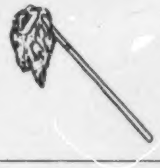
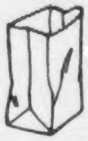
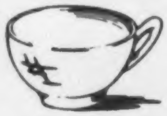
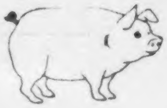
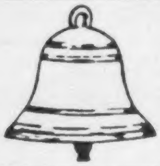
1.		__un	c ○	s ○	z ○
2.		__at	n ○	p ○	h ○
3.		__et	g ○	j ○	k ○
4.		__ug	r ○	w ○	l ○
5.		__an	f ○	s ○	v ○
6.		__eg	r ○	w ○	l ○
7.		__at	d ○	b ○	p ○

STOP

8.		pi__	n ○	b ○	m ○
9.		ca__	d ○	k ○	t ○
10.		be__	t ○	b ○	d ○
11.		to__	b ○	p ○	q ○
12.		do__	g ○	j ○	k ○

STOP

VOWELS

13.		m__p	u ○	o ○	a ○
14.		b__g	e ○	o ○	a ○
15.		c__p	u ○	a ○	o ○
16.		p__g	i ○	a ○	e ○
17.		b__ll	a ○	e ○	i ○

STOP

DICTATION

18. ______________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

19. ______________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

20. ______________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

21. ______________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

22. ______________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING—END-OF-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 1

SWRL

NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

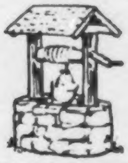
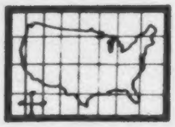
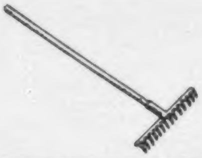
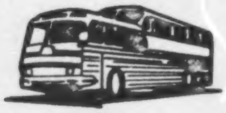
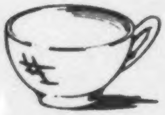
First Initial ○A ○B ○C ○D ○E ○F ○G ○H ○I ○J ○K ○L ○M ○N ○O ○P ○Q ○R ○S ○T ○U ○V ○W ○X ○Y ○Z
Last Initial ○A ○B ○C ○D ○E ○F ○G ○H ○I ○J ○K ○L ○M ○N ○O ○P ○Q ○R ○S ○T ○U ○V ○W ○X ○Y ○Z

Level ● ○2 ○3
Form ○A ○B ●

Optional Pupil Number ___ ○0 ○1 ○2 ○3 ○4 ○5 ○6 ○7 ○8 ○9
___ ○0 ○1 ○2 ○3 ○4 ○5 ○6 ○7 ○8 ○9

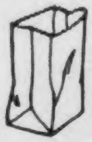
Grade ○1 ○2 ○3 ○4 ○5 ○6

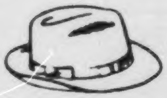
CONSONANTS

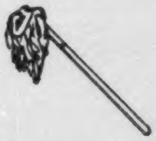
1.	5	__ive	v ○	f ○	p ○
2.		__ell	w ○	m ○	v ○
3.		__ap	n ○	w ○	m ○
4.		__ake	w ○	l ○	r ○
5.		__us	d ○	b ○	p ○
6.		__up	k ○	c ○	g ○

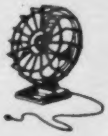
STOP

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

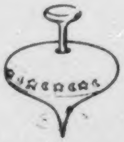
7.

ba__
g c k
○ ○ ○

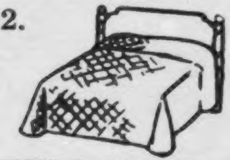
8.

ha__
b t d
○ ○ ○

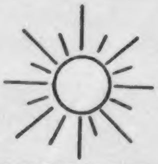
9.

mo__
k b p
○ ○ ○

10.

fa__
n b m
○ ○ ○

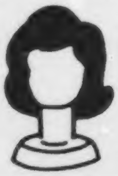
VOWELS

11.

t__p
o e u
○ ○ ○

12.

b__d
i a e
○ ○ ○

13.

s__n
a u e
○ ○ ○

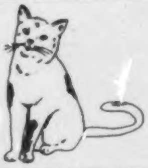
14.



w__g

e	i	o
○	○	○

15.

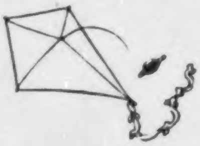


c__t

o	e	a
○	○	○

STOP

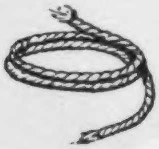
16.



k__

ite	it
○	○

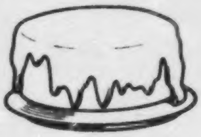
17.



r__

op	ope
○	○

18.



c__

ak	ake
○	○

STOP

DICTATION

19. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

20. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

21. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

22. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

23. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

24. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

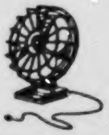
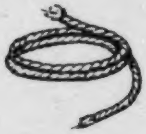
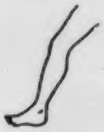
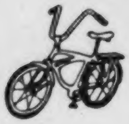
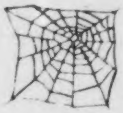
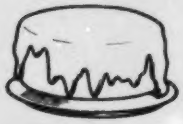
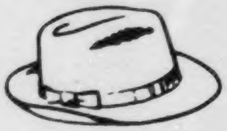
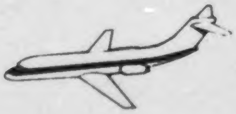
26. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING—BEGINNING INVENTORY: LEVEL 2

NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

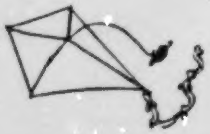
First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	① ● ③
Form	● Ⓑ Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

1.		__an	s O	f O	v O
2.		__ope	r O	l O	w O
3.		__eg	w O	l O	r O
4.		__ike	d O	p O	b O
5.		__eb	v O	r O	w O
6.		__ake	c O	k O	g O
7.		__at	h O	p O	n O
8.		__et	y O	g O	j O

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

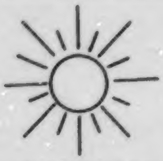
9.



__ite

g	k	c
O	O	O

10.

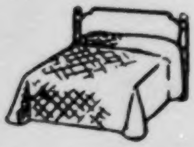


__un

c	z	s
O	O	O

STOP

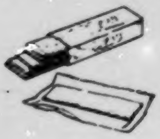
11.



be__

b	t	d
O	O	O

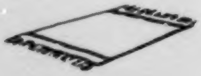
12.



gu__

m	b	n
O	O	O

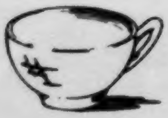
13.



ru__

g	k	j
O	O	O

14.



cu__

b	p	q
O	O	O

15.

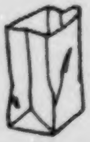
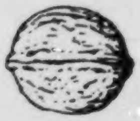
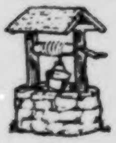
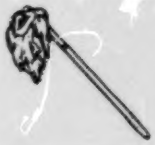
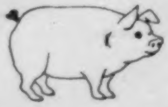
10

te__

m	d	n
O	O	O

STOP

VOWELS

16.		b__g	a ○	e ○	o ○
17.		n__t	a ○	o ○	u ○
18.		w__ll	u ○	e ○	i ○
19.		m__p	o ○	u ○	a ○
20.		p__g	e ○	i ○	a ○

STOP

DICTATION

21. ______________________________

	Correct	Incorrect
	○	○

22. ______________________________

	Correct	Incorrect
	○	○

23. ______________________________

	Correct	Incorrect
	○	○

24. ______________________________

	Correct	Incorrect
	○	○

25. ______________________________

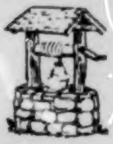
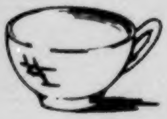
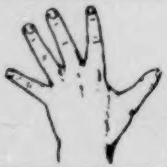
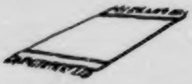
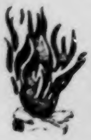
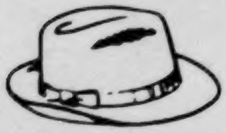
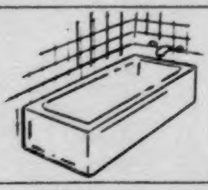
	Correct	Incorrect
	○	○

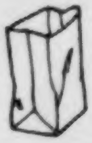
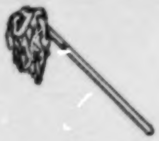
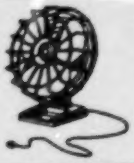
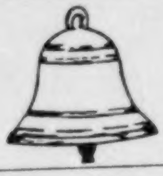
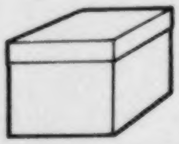
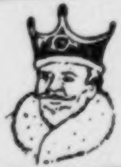
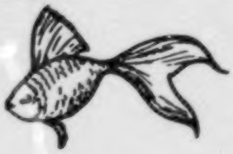
PVS SPELLING—MID-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 2

NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

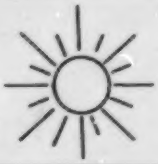
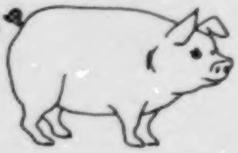
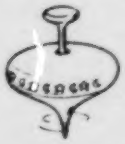
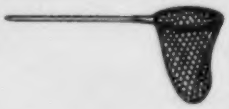
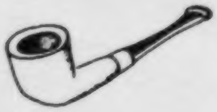
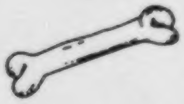
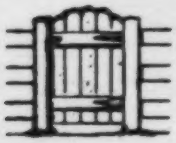
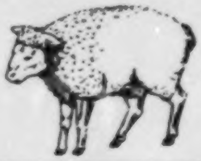
First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	① ● ③
Form	Ⓐ ● Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

1.		__ell	m ○	w ○	r ○
2.		__up	c ○	k ○	g ○
3.	6	__ix	c ○	z ○	s ○
4.		__and	n ○	r ○	h ○
5.		__ug	r ○	l ○	w ○
6.		__ire	f ○	v ○	s ○
7.		ha__	b ○	t ○	d ○
8.		tu__	d ○	b ○	g ○

9.		ba__	k ○	j ○	g ○
10.		mo__	b ○	p ○	d ○
11.		fa__	m ○	b ○	n ○
12.		be__	ll ○	ff ○	l ○
13.		bo__	s ○	x ○	ks ○
14.		ki__	ng ○	g ○	n ○
15.		fi__	ss ○	s ○	sh ○

VOWELS

16.		s__n	o ○	u ○	a ○
17.		p__g	e ○	a ○	i ○
18.		t__p	o ○	u ○	e ○
19.		n__t	i ○	a ○	e ○
20.		p__	ip ○		ipe ○
21.		b__	one ○		on ○
22.		g__	ate ○		at ○
23.		sh__	ep ○		eep ○

STOP

DICTATION

24. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

26. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

27. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

28. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

29. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

30. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

31. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

32. ______________________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

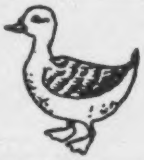
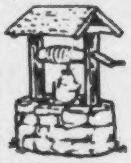
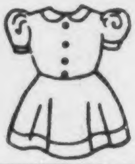
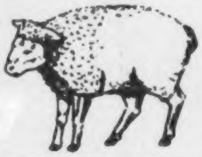
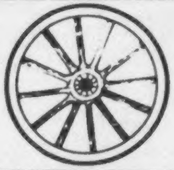
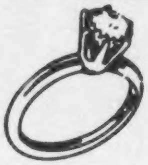
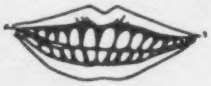
PVS SPELLING—END-OF-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 2

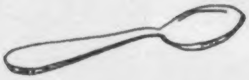
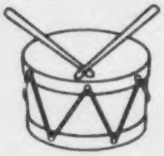
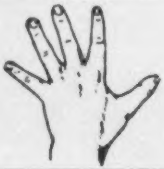
SWRL

NAME ______________________ TEACHER ______________________

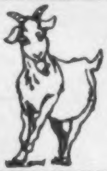
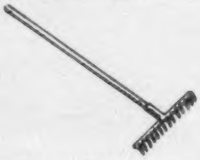
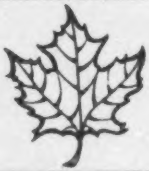
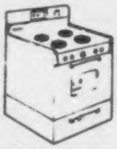
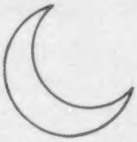
First Initial A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
Last Initial A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
Level 1 ● 3
Form A B ●
Optional Pupil Number 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Grade 1 2 3
4 5 6

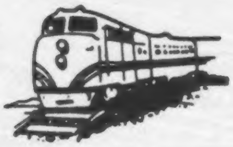
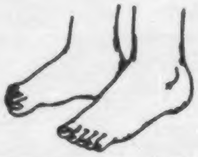
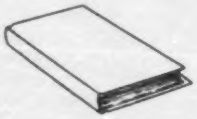
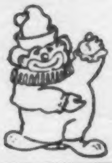
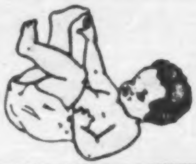
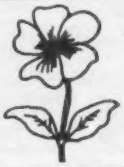
CONSONANTS

1.		du__	ck O	c O	k O
2.		we__	l O	ff O	ll O
3.	6	si__	x O	s O	ks O
4.		dre__	s O	ss O	z O
5.		__eep	sh O	s O	ch O
6.		__eel	w O	h O	wh O
7.		ri__	g O	ng O	n O
8.		tee__	th O	f O	s O

9.		__oon	s ○	p ○	sp ○
10.		__um	dr ○	d ○	br ○
11.		ha__	n ○	nd ○	d ○

VOWELS

12.		g__	ote ○	owt ○	oat ○
13.		r__	ake ○	ak ○	aik ○
14.		l__	ef ○	eaf ○	eef ○
15.		st__	oav ○	ove ○	ov ○
16.		m__	on ○	une ○	oon ○

17.		tr__	ane ○	ayn ○	ain ○
18.		f__	eet ○	eat ○	et ○
19.		b__	ook ○	ok ○	uk ○
20.		cl__	on ○	own ○	oun ○
21.		bab__	i ○	ee ○	y ○
22.		flow__	r ○	er ○	or ○

STOP

DICTATION

23. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

24. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

26. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

27. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

28. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

29. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

30. ____________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING—BEGINNING INVENTORY: LEVEL 3

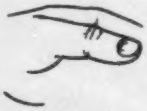
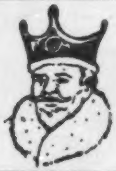
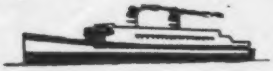
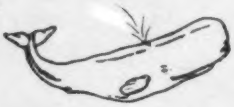
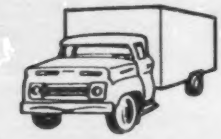
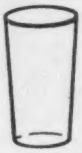
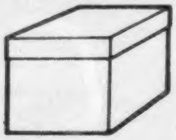
SWRL

NAME ______________________________ TEACHER ______________________________

First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	① ② ●
Form	● Ⓑ Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

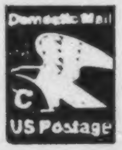
Which letter or letters finish the word?

1.		__umb	h ○	th ○	t ○
2.		ki__	ng ○	n ○	g ○
3.		__ip	s ○	ch ○	sh ○
4.		__ale	wh ○	w ○	hw ○
5.		tru__	ck ○	k ○	c ○
6.		gla__	se ○	ss ○	s ○
7.		bo__	ks ○	sk ○	x ○

Page 2

Which letter or letters finish the word?

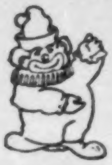
8.


Domestic Mail
C
US Postage

sta__

p	np	mp
○	○	○

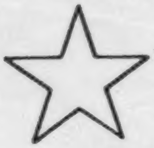
9.



__own

kl	cl	c
○	○	○

10.



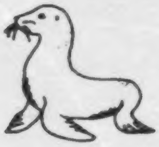
__ar

s	t	st
○	○	○

VOWELS

Which letter or letters finish the word?

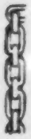
11.



s____

ele	eal	eel
○	○	○

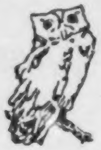
12.



ch____

an	ane	ain
○	○	○

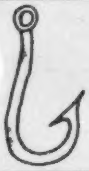
13.



__l

ow	o	ou
○	○	○

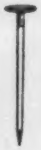
14



h____

ook	ouk	uk
○	○	○

15.



n____

ale	al	ail
○	○	○

STRUCTURE

Answer the questions.

16. Which word comes **first** in a dictionary?

sun	car	pan
○	○	○

17. Which word come **last** in a dictionary?

fast	bike	tree
○	○	○

Which word finishes the sentence?

18. Where have you ____ all day?

been	bin	ben
○	○	○

19. Please ____ me the book.

giv	geve	give
○	○	○

20. When ____ the bell ring?

duz	does	dos
○	○	○

STOP

DICTATION

21. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

22. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

23. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

24. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

26. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

27. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING—MID-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 3

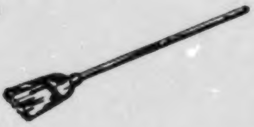
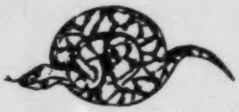
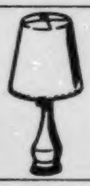
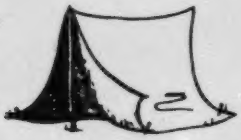
SWRL

NAME ________________________ TEACHER ________________________

First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	① ② ●
Form	Ⓐ ● Ⓒ
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters finish the word?

1.		__oom	dr O	br O	b O
2.		__ake	sn O	s O	sm O
3.		la__	m O	p O	mp [✓ O]
4.		te__	nt O	t O	n O

Read the sentence.
Which letter or letters finish the word?

5.	John fell o__ the bike.	f O	ft O	ff O
6.	Try to ca___ the ball with one hand.	sh O	tch O	ch O

VOWELS

Read the sentence.
Which letter or letters finish the word?

7.	Put some s__lt on the eggs.	aw ○	a ○	o ○
8.	Please t__ your shoe.	ie ○	i ○	y ○
9.	The cows are in the b__n.	or ○	a ○	ar ○
10.	Sue goes to this ch__ch.	er ○	ir ○	ur ○
11.	Which runner will be f__st?	ir ○	ur ○	er ○
12.	María helped h__ brother.	ur ○	er ○	ir ○

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

13.	**fast + er**	faster ○	fastter ○	fastr ○
14.	**make + ing**	makeing ○	macking ○	making ○
15.	**glass + es**	glases ○	glasses ○	glassees ○
16.	**live + ed**	livd ○	lived ○	liveed ○

STRUCTURE

Which word finishes the sentence?

17.	Did you ____ the dog bark?	hear ○	here ○	
18.	José has __ books.	too ○	to ○	two ○
19.	Pat will ____ a letter to her friend.	right ○	write ○	
20.	Everyone ____ the man's name.	new ○	knew ○	

DICTATION

21. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

22. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

23. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

24. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

26. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

27. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

28. ____________________

Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING—END-OF-YEAR INVENTORY: LEVEL 3

SWRL

NAME ____________________ TEACHER ____________________

First Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Last Initial	Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ Ⓖ Ⓗ Ⓘ Ⓙ Ⓚ Ⓛ Ⓜ Ⓝ Ⓞ Ⓟ Ⓠ Ⓡ Ⓢ Ⓣ Ⓤ Ⓥ Ⓦ Ⓧ Ⓨ Ⓩ
Level	① ② ●
Form	Ⓐ Ⓑ ●
Optional Pupil Number	⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⓪ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
Grade	① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters finish the word?

1.	Joe lives in a large __ity.	s O	z O	c O
2.	Let's fo__ow Amy up the hill.	ll O	l O	w O
3.	Look at the bo__om of the picture.	dd O	tt O	t O
4.	Do you like to dan__?	ss O	ce O	s O

VOWELS

Which letter or letters finish the word?

5.	Please sit on the ch____.	air O	ar O	are O
6.	The gl__ is very sticky.	oo O	u O	ue O

Copyright © 1982 SWRL Educational Research and Development

Which letter or letters finish the word?

7.

Miguel lives n____ the school.	eer	ear	ir
	○	○	○

8.

Did Jill dr____ that picture?	au	o	aw
	○	○	○

9.

Help me p__sh the wagon.	oo	o	u
	○	○	○

10.

You can w______ my hat.	ear	air	ere
	○	○	○

11.

The sun is too br______.	ite	ight	it
	○	○	○

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

12.

race + ed	raced	raceed	racd
	○	○	○

13.

rub + ed	rubbed	rubd	rubed
	○	○	○

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

14.

bite + ing	bitting	biteing	biting
	O	O	O

15.

dig + ing	digging	digeing	diging
	O	O	O

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the sentence?

16.

Jeff _____ go with us.	cant	can't	ca'nt
	O	O	O

17.

Liz said that _____ help.	shell	she'l	she'll
	O	O	O

Which word completes the compound word?

18.

every_____	room	one	part
	O	O	O

19.

_____walk	side	any	his
	O	O	O

STOP

DICTATION

20. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

21. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

22. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

23. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

24. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

25. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

26. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

27. ______________________________ Correct ○ Incorrect ○

PVS SPELLING

Beginning Inventory—Level 4

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. We saw a clown at the ___ircus.

Ⓐ sc
Ⓑ s
Ⓒ z
Ⓓ c

2. The car stopped in the mi___le of the street.

Ⓔ dd
Ⓕ tt
Ⓖ d
Ⓗ t

3. Did you mi___ the bus?

Ⓐ s
Ⓑ ss
Ⓒ se
Ⓓ st

4. Isabel ate an apple for lun___.

Ⓔ sh
Ⓕ ch
Ⓖ tch
Ⓗ ck

5. My pet ra___it is black and white.

Ⓐ b
Ⓑ pp
Ⓒ bb
Ⓓ p

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. Dad t_____ us to the show.

Ⓔ ok
Ⓕ ook
Ⓖ uk
Ⓗ oke

7. Julie has a g_____ ring.

Ⓐ olde
Ⓑ owld
Ⓒ oald
Ⓓ old

8. Tony's dog likes to b___k at cats.

Ⓔ ar
Ⓕ a
Ⓖ er
Ⓗ or

9. The baby can cr_____ on the floor.

Ⓐ all
Ⓑ oll
Ⓒ aul
Ⓓ awl

10. The old man told us a tr___ story.

Ⓔ u
Ⓕ oo
Ⓖ ue
Ⓗ ew

Which letter or letters complete the word?

11. Did you b__n all of the wood?

Ⓐ ur
Ⓑ er
Ⓒ ir

12. We are moving to a new t__n.

Ⓔ o
Ⓕ au
Ⓖ ow
Ⓗ ou

13. Ricardo m____ come to the party.

Ⓐ ite
Ⓑ it
Ⓒ iet
Ⓓ ight

14. The flowers will d__ if they don't get water.

Ⓔ y
Ⓕ ie
Ⓖ i

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct?
Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

15. hike + ing

Ⓐ hikeing
Ⓑ hiking
Ⓒ hikking

16. stop + ed

Ⓔ stopd
Ⓕ stoped
Ⓖ stopped

Which letter or letters complete the word?

17. Susan is tall__ than Jenny.

Ⓐ er
Ⓑ ur
Ⓒ ar
Ⓓ or

18. This shirt is too dirt__.

Ⓔ ey
Ⓕ ie
Ⓖ e
Ⓗ y

19. Tom stay__ in the house.

Ⓐ d
Ⓑ ed

20. Let's wash the dish__.

Ⓔ es
Ⓕ s

STRUCTURE

21. Which word comes first in a dictionary?

Ⓐ bring
Ⓑ best
Ⓒ bump
Ⓓ both

22. Which word comes last in a dictionary?

Ⓔ splash
Ⓕ spot
Ⓖ spring
Ⓗ spoke

Which word completes the sentence?

23. Our class will go to the zoo next ___ ___.

Ⓐ week
Ⓑ weak

24. I wish that I ______ how to dance.

Ⓔ new
Ⓕ knew

25. Hurry! ______ going to be late.

Ⓐ Were'
Ⓑ Wer'e
Ⓒ We're
Ⓓ Were

26. They ______ know my name.

Ⓔ don't
Ⓕ do'nt
Ⓖ dont'
Ⓗ dont

Which word completes the compound word?

27. after______

Ⓐ school
Ⓑ noon
Ⓒ this
Ⓓ today

28. ______side

Ⓔ right
Ⓕ our
Ⓖ best
Ⓗ out

PVS SPELLING

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 4

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. David put his money in the ba__k.

Ⓐ ng
Ⓑ en
Ⓒ nn
Ⓓ n

2. Stre__ your arms above your head.

Ⓔ sh
Ⓕ ch
Ⓖ tch
Ⓗ ck

3. Did you noti__ Isabel's new bike?

Ⓐ ce
Ⓑ s
Ⓒ se
Ⓓ ss

4. We need to buy a bo__le of milk.

Ⓔ tt
Ⓕ t
Ⓖ d
Ⓗ dd

5. Danny bought some peanuts for only ten __ents.

Ⓐ s
Ⓑ c
Ⓒ z

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. My sister is five y__s old today.

Ⓔ eer
Ⓕ ir
Ⓖ ear
Ⓗ er

7. The farmer grows corn in this f__ld.

Ⓐ ie
Ⓑ e
Ⓒ ea
Ⓓ ee

8. Mike can play after he does his w__k.

Ⓔ ir
Ⓕ ur
Ⓖ or
Ⓗ er

9. Your hat won't fit on my h__d.

Ⓐ a
Ⓑ e
Ⓒ ee
Ⓓ ea

10. The zoo has many w__ld animals.

Ⓔ ie
Ⓕ i
Ⓖ igh
Ⓗ y

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct?
Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

11. busy + est

Ⓐ busiest
Ⓑ busyest
Ⓒ busest

12. wolf + s

Ⓔ wolfs
Ⓕ wolves
Ⓖ wolvs

13. slide + ing

Ⓐ slideing
Ⓑ slidding
Ⓒ sliding

14. hug + ed

Ⓔ huged
Ⓕ hugged
Ⓖ hugd

15. easy + er

Ⓐ easyer
Ⓑ easer
Ⓒ easier

STRUCTURE

Which word is the one written in pronunciation symbols?

16. /bak/

Ⓔ bike
Ⓕ bake
Ⓖ book
Ⓗ back

17. /kōld/

Ⓐ called
Ⓑ cold
Ⓒ killed
Ⓓ could

18. /fel/

Ⓔ fell
Ⓕ full
Ⓖ fill
Ⓗ feel

19. /līk/

Ⓐ lake
Ⓑ look
Ⓒ lick
Ⓓ like

PVS SPELLING

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 4

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. Most rabbits like to eat cabba__.

Ⓐ je
Ⓑ j
Ⓒ ge
Ⓓ dge

2. Eric was too tired to cli__ the tree.

Ⓔ mm
Ⓕ me
Ⓖ m
Ⓗ mb

3. Winter is the coldest sea__on of the year.

Ⓐ c
Ⓑ s
Ⓒ ss
Ⓓ z

4. Ann heard a loud __ock at the door.

Ⓔ kn
Ⓕ n
Ⓖ k
Ⓗ gn

5. A soft bree__ blew through the pines.

Ⓐ z
Ⓑ s
Ⓒ se
Ⓓ ze

6. We used a blue ribbon to __ap the gift.

Ⓔ r
Ⓕ wr
Ⓕ w

7. The bird flew away __ickly.

Ⓐ q
Ⓑ kw
Ⓒ qu
Ⓓ cw

8. The guard was wearing a ba__ on his shirt.

Ⓔ dge
Ⓕ j
Ⓖ ge
Ⓗ dg

9. Do you rai__ carrots in your garden?

Ⓐ s
Ⓑ se
Ⓒ ze
Ⓓ z

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

10. Greg threw the ball, and Julie c__t it.

- Ⓔ ough
- Ⓕ aw
- Ⓖ au
- Ⓗ augh

11. A dime is a small silver c__n.

- Ⓐ oe
- Ⓑ oi
- Ⓒ oy
- Ⓓ o

12. Elena will be home bef__ six o'clock.

- Ⓔ ore
- Ⓕ oar
- Ⓖ our
- Ⓗ or

13. Danny likes to ch__ gum.

- Ⓐ ue
- Ⓑ u
- Ⓒ ew
- Ⓓ oo

14. The ship is leaving for a long v__age across the sea.

- Ⓔ oi
- Ⓕ oe
- Ⓖ oy
- Ⓗ o

15. Sharon th__t she knew the right answer.

- Ⓐ o
- Ⓑ augh
- Ⓒ aw
- Ⓓ ough

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

16. safe + est

- Ⓔ safest
- Ⓕ saffest
- Ⓖ safeest

17. thief + s

- Ⓐ thievs
- Ⓑ thiefs
- Ⓒ thieves

18. happy + ly

- Ⓔ happyly
- Ⓕ happily
- Ⓖ hapily

Which letter or letters complete the word?

19. Those two are twins.

They look __like.

Ⓐ dis
Ⓑ re
Ⓒ pre
Ⓓ a

20. We will get hungry __less we eat something.

Ⓔ a
Ⓕ un
Ⓖ dis
Ⓗ pre

STRUCTURE

Which abbreviation is correct?

21. Doctor

Ⓐ Dtr.
Ⓑ Dor.
Ⓒ Doct.
Ⓓ Dr.

22. Saturday

Ⓔ Sat.
Ⓕ Sa.
Ⓖ Sdy.
Ⓗ Sad.

Which word completes the sentence?

23. That is my ______ car.

Ⓐ mothers
Ⓑ mothe'rs
Ⓒ mother's

24. ______ already read that book.

Ⓔ I've
Ⓕ Ive'
Ⓖ Ive

PVS SPELLING

Beginning Inventory—Level 5

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. Alex took a __art of milk out of the refrigerator.

Ⓐ kw
Ⓑ cu
Ⓒ qu
Ⓓ q

2. Patricia __ows where I live.

Ⓔ n
Ⓕ k
Ⓖ gn
Ⓗ kn

3. The car turned the __ong way at the corner.

Ⓐ wr
Ⓑ rh
Ⓒ r
Ⓓ w

4. Which book did you choo__?

Ⓔ z
Ⓕ se
Ⓖ ze
Ⓗ s

5. Mr. Brown will ju____ the contest.

Ⓐ ge
Ⓑ dge
Ⓒ j
Ⓓ dg

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. I will need some br__d for my sandwich.

Ⓔ ea
Ⓕ e
Ⓖ a
Ⓗ ee

7. Mrs. Hill took her d____ter to school.

Ⓐ au
Ⓑ ough
Ⓒ aw
Ⓓ augh

8. The bird tried to catch a w__m.

Ⓔ ur
Ⓕ er
Ⓖ or
Ⓗ ir

9. Did you hear a loud n__se?

Ⓐ oy
Ⓑ oi
Ⓒ oe
Ⓓ ou

10. Gloria gr__ two inches last year.

Ⓔ ue
Ⓕ oo
Ⓖ u
Ⓗ ew

Which letter or letters complete the word?

11. N____ of us liked the story.

Ⓐ un
Ⓑ on
Ⓒ unn
Ⓓ one

12. She is always k__nd to animals.

Ⓔ i
Ⓕ igh
Ⓖ y
Ⓗ ie

13. Do you enj__ swimming?

Ⓐ oy
Ⓑ oe
Ⓒ uy
Ⓓ oi

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

14. **carry + s**

Ⓔ carrys
Ⓕ carries
Ⓖ carres

15. **play + er**

Ⓐ player
Ⓑ plaier
Ⓒ plair

16. **lucky + ly**

Ⓔ luckyly
Ⓕ luckly
Ⓖ luckily

Which letters complete the word?

17. It was a very strange bird.
It was the most __usual bird
I've ever seen.

Ⓐ dis
Ⓑ un
Ⓒ pre

18. Today is the warm____ day of the year.

Ⓔ est
Ⓕ es
Ⓖ ist

STRUCTURE

Which word is the one written in pronunciation symbols?

19. /sēt/

Ⓐ seat
Ⓑ sight
Ⓒ set
Ⓓ sit

20. /taks/

Ⓔ talks
Ⓕ takes
Ⓖ tax
Ⓗ Texas

Which abbreviation is correct?

21. October

Ⓐ Otbr.
Ⓑ Oct.
Ⓒ Ocr.
Ⓓ Oc.

22. pound

Ⓔ pn.
Ⓕ pd.
Ⓖ lb.
Ⓗ oz.

23. yard

Ⓐ y.
Ⓑ yr.
Ⓒ yrd.
Ⓓ yd.

Which spelling is correct?

24. The store will be closed on _____ Day.

Ⓔ Chrismus
Ⓕ Christmas
Ⓖ Christmis
Ⓗ Cristmas

25. Our homework is due on _____.

Ⓐ Wedsday
Ⓑ Wensday
Ⓒ Wendsday
Ⓓ Wednesday

26. There are _____ months in a year.

Ⓔ twelv
Ⓕ twelf
Ⓖ twelfe
Ⓗ twelve

27. _____ is often a very cold month.

Ⓐ Feburary
Ⓑ Febuary
Ⓒ February
Ⓓ Febrary

28. _____ been working very hard.

Ⓔ They've
Ⓕ Theyve
Ⓖ Theyve'
Ⓗ Theyv'e

29. Elena said that _____ come to visit us.

Ⓐ shell
Ⓑ shell'
Ⓒ she'll
Ⓓ shel'l

30. _____ some candy for you.

Ⓔ Heres'
Ⓕ Her'es
Ⓖ Heres
Ⓗ Here's

PVS SPELLING

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 5

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. That joke made all of us lau__.

Ⓐ f
Ⓑ ph
Ⓒ gh
Ⓓ ff

2. We learned about the different planets in our __ience class.

Ⓔ sc
Ⓕ c
Ⓖ s
Ⓗ st

3. The words on the si__ said, "Keep Off the Grass."

Ⓐ n
Ⓑ gn
Ⓒ nn
Ⓓ en

4. Did you hear the tele__one ring?

Ⓔ ff
Ⓕ ph
Ⓖ f
Ⓗ th

5. Carlos doesn't ride the bus. He likes to wa__ to school.

Ⓐ k
Ⓑ ck
Ⓒ ch
Ⓓ lk

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. Gloria put an ice c____ in her drink.

Ⓔ ube
Ⓕ ub
Ⓖ ewb
Ⓗ oub

7. We have to paint the walls and the c__ling.

Ⓐ ee
Ⓑ ea
Ⓒ ie
Ⓓ ei

8. Teddy wasn't late. He was ____ly.

Ⓔ er
Ⓕ ear
Ⓖ ur
Ⓗ ere

9. A large gr____ of children stayed for the game.

Ⓐ oop
Ⓑ ewp
Ⓒ upe
Ⓓ oup

Which letter or letters complete the word?

10. Someone is knocking on the fr__nt door.

Ⓔ ou
Ⓕ u
Ⓖ oo
Ⓗ o

AFFIXES AND ENDINGS

Which letters complete the word?

11. The doctor is very busy at the hospit__.

Ⓐ le
Ⓑ al
Ⓒ el
Ⓓ ol

12. The king and queen live in a beautiful cast__.

Ⓔ al
Ⓕ il
Ⓖ le
Ⓗ el

13. Terry is building a mod__ airplane.

Ⓐ el
Ⓑ il
Ⓒ ol
Ⓓ le

14. Alice liked the book so much that she is going to __read it.

Ⓔ un
Ⓕ dis
Ⓖ re
Ⓗ pre

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the sentence?

15. We are adding a room to ______ house.

Ⓐ hour
Ⓑ are
Ⓒ our

16. Tony walked ______ the large buildings.

Ⓔ passed
Ⓕ past

17. The children agreed to ______ at the park on Saturday.

Ⓐ meat
Ⓑ meet

18. Lucy needs to buy a stamp before she can ______ her letter.

Ⓔ mail
Ⓕ male

Which abbreviation is correct?

19. Avenue

Ⓐ Avn.
Ⓑ Av.
Ⓒ Ave.

20. Monday

Ⓔ Mon.
Ⓕ Mdy.
Ⓖ Mo.

PVS SPELLING

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 5

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. That horse is so ___entle that anyone can ride him.

Ⓐ gh
Ⓑ j
Ⓒ g
Ⓓ gi

2. It's a hard problem, but I think that Juan can sol___ it.

Ⓔ ve
Ⓕ fe
Ⓖ v
Ⓗ f

3. Jenny is going to the costume party. She will dress up like a ___ost.

Ⓐ g
Ⓑ gh
Ⓒ gu
Ⓓ kh

4. If you can't eat the whole apple, you can cut it in ha___.

Ⓔ fe
Ⓕ ff
Ⓖ f
Ⓗ lf

5. Linda was the first one to find the an___er to the question.

Ⓐ s
Ⓑ sw
Ⓒ ss
Ⓓ sc

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. Who is the ___thor of that book?

Ⓔ au
Ⓕ aw
Ⓖ a
Ⓗ o

7. Nick's family moved from the city to the c___ntry.

Ⓐ o
Ⓑ u
Ⓒ oo
Ⓓ ou

8. Yesterday, Patricia w_____ her new shoes to school.

Ⓔ oor
Ⓕ or
Ⓖ ore
Ⓗ our

Which letters complete the word?

9. We have some fresh fr__ in the refrigerator.

Ⓐ oot
Ⓑ uit
Ⓒ ute
Ⓓ ut

10. Have you h__d the latest news?

Ⓔ ur
Ⓕ eer
Ⓖ er
Ⓗ ear

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct?
Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

11. **care + less**

Ⓐ carless
Ⓑ carrless
Ⓒ careless

12. **guard + ed**

Ⓔ guarded
Ⓕ guardded
Ⓖ guarrded

13. **express + ion**

Ⓐ expresion
Ⓑ expression

14. **ice + y**

Ⓔ icy
Ⓕ icey
Ⓖ icie

15. **beauty + ful**

Ⓐ beautyful
Ⓑ beautiful
Ⓒ beauteful

16. **thin + er**

Ⓔ thinner
Ⓕ thiner

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the **compound word?**

17. ______corn

Ⓐ farmer's
Ⓑ cook
Ⓒ pop
Ⓓ tall

18. moon______

Ⓔ sky
Ⓕ night
Ⓖ out
Ⓗ light

Which word is the one written in pronunciation symbols?

19. /noiz/

Ⓐ news
Ⓑ noise
Ⓒ nose
Ⓓ nurse

20. /skil/

Ⓔ school
Ⓕ skull
Ⓖ skill
Ⓗ scale

PVS SPELLING

Beginning Inventory—-Level 6

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. The al__abet has 26 letters.

Ⓐ f
Ⓑ p
Ⓒ ph
Ⓓ ff

2. Ricardo ate lunch becau__ he was very hungry.

Ⓔ se
Ⓕ z
Ⓖ s
Ⓗ zz

3. A forest ran__er spotted the fire.

Ⓐ dg
Ⓑ j
Ⓒ g
Ⓓ gg

4. Orange jui__ is good for you.

Ⓔ s
Ⓕ ce
Ⓖ ss
Ⓗ se

5. Be sure to co__ your hair.

Ⓐ mb
Ⓑ mm
Ⓒ m

6. Judy is the team's best pi__er.

Ⓔ ch
Ⓕ sh
Ⓖ ti
Ⓗ tch

7. If it gets too cold, the water will free__.

Ⓐ z
Ⓑ se
Ⓒ ze
Ⓓ zz

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

8. Bob will wear his new s____ to the party.

Ⓔ ut
Ⓕ oot
Ⓖ ute
Ⓗ uit

9. Do you know the final sc____ of the game?

Ⓐ oar
Ⓑ or
Ⓒ ore
Ⓓ oor

Which letter or letters complete the word?

10. When did you l__n how to swim?

Ⓔ ur
Ⓕ ear
Ⓖ ir
Ⓗ er

11. The accident was not his f__lt.

Ⓐ au
Ⓑ aw
Ⓒ o
Ⓓ a

12. Her brother is too y__ng to go by himself.

Ⓔ u
Ⓕ o
Ⓖ ou
Ⓗ oo

13. Terry found a job as a cl__k at the store.

Ⓐ ur
Ⓑ ir
Ⓒ er
Ⓓ ear

14. Miguel plays the piano, and Alice plays the fl____.

Ⓔ uit
Ⓕ oot
Ⓖ ut
Ⓗ ute

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

15. wife + s

Ⓐ wifes
Ⓑ wives

16. waste + ful

Ⓔ wasteful
Ⓕ wastful

17. easy + est

Ⓐ easiest
Ⓑ easyest

18. complete + ion

Ⓔ completeion
Ⓕ completion

Which letter or letters complete the words?

19. It is __honest to take something that does not belong to you.

Ⓐ un
Ⓑ mis
Ⓒ dis

20. Please __lock the door so that I can come in.

Ⓔ dis
Ⓕ pre
Ⓖ un

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the sentence?

21. May I have a ______ of cake?

Ⓐ peace
Ⓑ piece

22. Susan ______ the ball farther than John.

Ⓔ through
Ⓕ threw

23. We will need a ______ of water to put out the campfire.

Ⓐ pail
Ⓑ pale

Which word is the one in pronunciation symbols?

24. /sūn/

Ⓔ son
Ⓕ seen
Ⓖ soon
Ⓗ sun

25. /mil/

Ⓐ mail
Ⓑ mule
Ⓒ mile
Ⓓ mill

Which word completes the sentence?

26. My father's sister is my ______.

Ⓔ aunt
Ⓕ ant

27. Maria went to the show with her ______.

Ⓐ frend
Ⓑ friend
Ⓒ freind

28. Let's rest for just a ______.

Ⓔ minit
Ⓕ minite
Ⓖ minute

29. Mike wants to sail across the ______.

Ⓐ ochen
Ⓑ ocean
Ⓒ oshen

30. Do we have homework ______ tonight?

Ⓔ agen
Ⓕ agan
Ⓖ agin
Ⓗ again

PVS SPELLING

Mid-Year Inventory—Level 6

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. John can type on an electric type__iter.

Ⓐ r
Ⓑ rr
Ⓒ wr
Ⓓ rh

2. Did you promi__ to be there?

Ⓔ se
Ⓕ ss
Ⓖ ce
Ⓗ s

3. Sharon speaks English and two forei__ languages.

Ⓐ nn
Ⓑ gn
Ⓒ n
Ⓓ en

4. I think I've had enou__ to eat.

Ⓔ gh
Ⓕ f
Ⓖ ph
Ⓗ ff

5. The storm caused a lot of dama__.

Ⓐ j
Ⓑ dge
Ⓒ je
Ⓓ ge

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. Mr. and Mrs. Brown have two sons and one d____ter.

Ⓔ au
Ⓕ aw
Ⓖ augh
Ⓗ ough

7. The giant stat__ was carved from stone.

Ⓐ ew
Ⓑ ue
Ⓒ oo
Ⓓ u

8. George said, "Be c____ful when you cross the street."

Ⓔ er
Ⓕ air
Ⓖ ere
Ⓗ are

9. Do you know the last v__se of the song?

Ⓐ ir
Ⓑ er
Ⓒ ur
Ⓓ or

Which letter or letters complete the word?

10. Pat used a sh__vel to dig the hole.

Ⓔ u
Ⓕ ou
Ⓖ oo
Ⓗ o

AFFIXES

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

11. clip + ed

Ⓐ cliped
Ⓑ clippd
Ⓒ clipped

12. pretty + est

Ⓔ prettiest
Ⓕ prettyest
Ⓖ prettest

13. half + s

Ⓐ halfs
Ⓑ halvs
Ⓒ halves

14. loose + ly

Ⓔ loosely
Ⓕ loosly
Ⓖ losely

15. celebrate + ion

Ⓐ celebrasion
Ⓑ celebration
Ⓒ celebrashun

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the sentence?

16. Linda and Carlos did ______ homework after school.

Ⓔ their
Ⓕ they're
Ⓖ there

17. Did you ______ a letter to your aunt?

Ⓐ right
Ⓑ write
Ⓒ rite

18. The airplane ______ through the clouds

Ⓔ flu
Ⓕ flue
Ⓖ flew

Which abbreviation is correct?

19. ounce

Ⓐ oc.
Ⓑ oun.
Ⓒ onc.
Ⓓ oz.

20. Company

Ⓔ Com.
Ⓕ Comp.
Ⓖ Co.
Ⓗ Cp.

PVS SPELLING

End-of-Year Inventory—Level 6

SWRL

CONSONANTS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

1. Jim used a sewing ma__ine to make his shirt.

Ⓐ sh
Ⓑ ch
Ⓒ tch
Ⓓ ss

2. You can hear the birds if you li__en carefully.

Ⓔ ss
Ⓕ s
Ⓖ st
Ⓗ sc

3. The sailors dropped the ship's an__or into the water.

Ⓐ ck
Ⓑ c
Ⓒ k
Ⓓ ch

4. Juanita will spend her vaca__ion with her grandmother.

Ⓔ t
Ⓕ sh
Ⓖ c
Ⓗ s

5. Sharon likes to eat crackers and chee__.

Ⓐ se
Ⓑ ze
Ⓒ s
Ⓓ z

VOWELS

Which letter or letters complete the word?

6. Tony lives next door to me. He is my n__bor.

Ⓔ ei
Ⓕ a
Ⓖ ay
Ⓗ eigh

7. Susan has a compl__ set of old stamps.

Ⓐ eet
Ⓑ et
Ⓒ eat
Ⓓ ete

8. That person is a very f__mous movie star.

Ⓔ ai
Ⓕ ay
Ⓖ a
Ⓗ ey

Which letter or letters complete the word?

9. The largest instrument in the band is the t__ba.

Ⓐ u
Ⓑ ou
Ⓒ oo
Ⓓ ew

10. When Jeff fell down, he hurt his arm and his sh__lder.

Ⓔ ow
Ⓕ ou
Ⓖ o
Ⓗ oa

11. Please bring a chair from the kitch__n.

Ⓐ a
Ⓑ e
Ⓒ i
Ⓓ u

12. The bride was wearing a v__ that covered her face.

Ⓔ al
Ⓕ ale
Ⓖ eil
Ⓗ eyl

AFFIXES AND ENDINGS

Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding endings to words.

13. differ + ence

Ⓐ differrence
Ⓑ diffrence
Ⓒ difference

14. operate + or

Ⓔ operator
Ⓕ operateor
Ⓖ operattor

15. lonely + ness

Ⓐ lonelyness
Ⓑ loneliness
Ⓒ lonliness

16. cover + age

Ⓔ coverage
Ⓕ coverrage
Ⓖ covrage

17. value + able

Ⓐ valuble
Ⓑ valueable
Ⓒ valuable

18. admit + ed

Ⓔ admitted
Ⓕ admited
Ⓖ admmited

Which spelling is correct?

19. legislate + ure

Ⓐ legislature
Ⓑ legislateure
Ⓒ legislachure

20. appear + ance

Ⓔ appearrance
Ⓕ appearance
Ⓖ apperance

Which letters complete the word?

21. Andrew likes to work by himself. He is very __dependent.

Ⓐ un
Ⓑ re
Ⓒ in
Ⓓ dis

22. Linda spent one doll__ at the store.

Ⓔ er
Ⓕ or
Ⓖ ar
Ⓗ ur

STRUCTURE

Which word completes the sentence?

23. Greg needs to ____ a button on his shirt.

Ⓐ sow
Ⓑ so
Ⓒ sew

24. The animals ran ______ the forest.

Ⓐ threw
Ⓑ through

25. We can't bake cookies until we mix some ______.

Ⓔ dough
Ⓕ doe

Which spelling is correct?

26. Let's measure you to find out your ______.

Ⓐ height
Ⓑ hite
Ⓒ highth

27. Although some people were frightened, Teresa remained ______.

Ⓔ colm
Ⓕ calm
Ⓖ cahm